

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



127 527

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY









# **MODELING MY LIFE**







JANET SCUDDER TO-DAY

# MODELING MY LIFE

*By JANET SCUDDER*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



NEW YORK  
HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY

COPYRIGHT, 1925, BY

JANET SCUDDER

COPYRIGHT, 1925, BY

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE U. S. A. BY  
THE QUINN & BODEN COMPANY  
RAHWAY, N. J.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY FRIEND,  
NORVAL RICHARDSON,  
AT WHOSE SUGGESTION AND WITH WHOSE  
ASSISTANCE IT WAS WRITTEN



## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I TERRE HAUTE . . . . .	3
II CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI . . . . .	32
III PARIS AND MACMONNIES . . . . .	72
IV STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK . . . . .	110
V FINDING MYSELF . . . . .	147
VI THE FROG FOUNTAIN . . . . .	174
VII FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS . . . . .	207
VIII WANDERINGS . . . . .	231
IX WAR EFFORT . . . . .	256
X LATER REFLECTIONS . . . . .	282



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
JANET SCUDDER TO-DAY . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
JANET SCUDDER AT THE AGE OF THREE . . . . .	6
JANET SCUDDER IN HER GARDEN IN PARIS . . . . .	7
JANET SCUDDER AT WORK AT THE WORLD'S FAIR, CHICAGO	22
THE "WHITE RABBITS" IN THE HORTICULTURAL BUILDING AT THE WORLD'S FAIR . . . . .	22
FREDERICK MACMONNIES IN HIS STUDIO, PARIS . . . . .	23
WALL FOUNTAIN . . . . .	54
BIRD FOUNTAIN . . . . .	55
SEAWEED FOUNTAIN . . . . .	86
MACMONNIES CRITICIZING THE WORK OF AMERICAN STU- DENTS . . . . .	86
PORTRAIT MEDALLIONS . . . . .	87
SEALS . . . . .	102
FIRST ARCHITECTURAL WORK DONE IN NEW YORK . . . . .	103
FROG FOUNTAIN . . . . .	134
BOY WITH FISH . . . . .	134
FROG FOUNTAIN . . . . .	135
WALL FOUNTAIN . . . . .	135
FIGHTING BOYS . . . . .	150
YOUNG DIANA . . . . .	151
LITTLE LADY FROM THE SEA . . . . .	214
SEATED PAN . . . . .	215
FISH GIRL . . . . .	230
SHELL FOUNTAIN . . . . .	230
JANET SCUDDER IN HER STUDIO, PARIS . . . . .	231

	PAGE
YOUNG PAN FOUNTAIN . . . . .	246
VICTORY STATUETTE . . . . .	247
TORTOISE BOY FOUNTAIN . . . . .	262
JANET SCUDDER IN LAFAYETTE BALL COSTUME . . . .	263

# **MODELING MY LIFE**



# I

## TERRE HAUTE

“WHAT do you think it was that made you decide to devote your life to art?” a friend once asked me.

This friend knew something about me, that I was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, in the '70's, in surroundings utterly devoid of any artistic traditions and made dismal by poverty—all tremendous burdens for a young woman determined to hitch her wagon to a star.

The question sent my thoughts wandering back through the past for an answer until they stopped before the tiny figure of myself when I was about six years old. I had been out in the garden playing with the flowers. The colors evidently stirred something latent in me for I can remember, as distinctly as though it had happened yesterday, the feeling of intense excitement that swept over me and carried me into the house and up to my grandmother. I can see her now, sitting by the window placidly knitting and receiving my onrush with a gentle smile.

“How did they ever get these beautiful colors?” I demanded breathlessly, holding a small bunch of flowers out towards her.

She put out her hand and touched me and then the flowers—for she had been blind for many years—and

## MODELING MY LIFE

very solemnly and impressively explained that colors were given flowers by God.

“He painted them!” I gasped.

She nodded, still very solemn.

“How?”

At this she laid down her knitting and her voice came a bit uneasily. “Why do you ask that, my child?”

“Because I want to paint some just like them. I’ve got to! I must!”

I am sure the creative instinct was born at that moment. I knew that I had to make something beautiful. I just had to express in some tangible way the strong emotion I was experiencing over the beauty of those flowers. Though of course I didn’t know how to formulate my thoughts or put into practice at the time the impulse that was in me, I realize now that from that day I have been working steadily and enthusiastically—never admitting discouragement and never acknowledging that it was a struggle—to give back in some form the joy the color of those flowers gave me.

Poets and writers have grown into the habit of calling this desire to create something beautiful the divine fire. Divine Fire! Perhaps it is that. Surely it is divine in the joy it gives. I have always thought that incident with the flowers—even though I was only six—must have been a tiny little flame from the great fire. But it was disturbing to me—and to my grandmother, too, for it carried me to her with many other pointed questions about the artistic accomplishments of

## TERRE HAUTE

God. In fact, it seems to me that the first symptoms of my future endeavors came into existence and centered about my grandmother. I suppose her influence, quieting while she was knitting things that I had to set up and usually finish for her, emotionally stimulating when she was singing hymns—these were her sole and only amusements—had something to do with bringing to life emotions that were dormant when I was surrounded by other members of the family. At any rate it was she who gave me those two large volumes of Longfellow which became so precious to me, not on account of the poetry in them but because of the illustrations. They had hardly been put into my hands—on the occasion of my eighth birthday—when I carried them off to the front parlor—a place where I was sure to be undisturbed as it was only used when there was a funeral—and there I spread them open on the marble-topped table, drew up a heavy black horse-hair chair and spent the rest of the day copying the illustrations on bits of discarded letters and envelopes. One of these pictures I must have copied a hundred times; it was very difficult to get right, and just for that reason was all the more interesting—some sort of a viking in full armor standing by an open door through which was seen the sea on which sailed a ship. It was very probably an illustration for “The Skeleton in Armor,” though I am not sure. The poetry made no impression on me; it was the picture that held all my attention. I believe I could shut my eyes and draw it now. When our house

## MODELING MY LIFE

caught on fire and the whole of Terre Haute's volunteer fire service came to the rescue, I was found rushing down the steps, which were already in flames, with those two ponderous volumes clasped in my arms. I had heard voices shouting out above the confusion to save the most valuable things, and there was no doubt in my mind that those books were the most valuable things in the house.

Another spark in my youthful tinder box flashed into flame when I heard my father playing the flute. It was a depressing, mournful sound, always emanating from that darkened front parlor where he habitually betook himself to indulge in this diversion, but it gave me another push in the direction of artistic effort. I was at once fired with an uncontrollable desire to make music. The piano appeared to be the most suitable instrument for me to begin with; in those days it was a traditional part of every young girl's education, irrespective of whether she showed any musical disposition or not. The teacher came, I was given a few lessons and began to practise finger exercises with an energy that was nothing short of violent. After a week I knew I was bored; learning to play the piano was evidently a question of years and years, whereas I could copy those illustrations from Longfellow in an hour or two; but there was a little playmate next door who had begun studying music a few months before I had, and had made considerable progress. She was already playing a tune—"Coming Through the Lavender," it was called. I couldn't bear to hear her playing that tune—without mistakes too—while I was



JANET SCUDDER AT THE AGE OF THREE



JANET SCUDDER IN HER GARDEN IN PARIS

## TERRE HAUTE

being held down to those tiresome finger exercises; it irritated me beyond control; and in an attempt to compete with her and drown the sound of her playing, I began practising my exercises in such a way that you couldn't have heard a brass band pass down the street. The "Anvil Chorus" would have sounded like a distant, religious chant beside the noise I was making. My brother Charlie suggested sympathetically that I leave a few bits of ivory on the keys; and several neighbors called to request that my practising be confined to hours when they were away from home—if not out of town.

This went on for about two weeks, in which my energy, if not my efficiency, developed with alarming rapidity. Then my teacher was forced to choose between teaching me or the children next door. By this time the noise I was making had become unendurable to the whole neighborhood; and as there were two pupils in the neighbor's house, whereas I was the only aspirant in my family, and as their parents had threatened to discontinue lessons if I were allowed to go on disturbing the peace, there was only one thing left for the poor teacher to do—relinquish me. She did it in a way that proved her to be a real diplomat. Instead of coming right out with the whole truth, she beat about the bush for a few days and then went to my father and told him that she had seen some of my sketches—always those same copies from the Longfellow books—and that she had come to the conclusion that I should give all my time to drawing and not waste my energies at the piano.

## MODELING MY LIFE

Her diplomacy—for it was probably that and not appreciation of my drawings—had an extraordinary influence on my later career. Instead of continuing at the piano I was sent to the Saturday afternoon drawing class at the Rose Polytechnic Institute. And this resulted, in a very short time, in my bringing home with exultation a large crayon drawing of a plaster cast of tulips. Genius was now in full flood. Any one—and especially a child—who could do a real crayon drawing was considered in those days worthy of the respect of the whole community.

“Your daughter has got something in her,” dear old Professor Ames, the director of the Institute, said to my father. “She should be given every advantage. When she graduates from the high school you will have to send her to the Academy of Art at Cincinnati.”

Cincinnati! Academy of Art! My head began to whirl; and it might have gone on whirling if Caroline Peddle—a friend I had made in the drawing class, and one who was particularly impressed with the assured way in which I had made that crayon drawing of the plaster cast of tulips—had not come in that afternoon and, after getting me off to herself in the woodshed and swearing me to secrecy, told me of a dazzling idea that had just that day popped into her head.

The county fair was going to be held in Terre Haute the next month, and besides the usual showing of pigs and poultry and live-stock, an exhibition of art was to be included—only home talent being allowed to enter

## TERRE HAUTE

the competition—for which amazing—to me—sums of money were to be offered as prizes. Caroline had got hold of a catalogue and brought it along with her. With trembling fingers she turned the pages and read the list of prizes aloud to me with a far from steady voice.

Crayon portrait of a mother and child.....	\$15.00
Water color, framed, of flowers.....	\$10.00
Oil painting on canvas of a horse in hand-carved frame .....	\$20.00
Landscape .....	\$5.00
Study of pansies on bolting cloth.....	\$2.50
Velvet banner with design in oils.....	\$3.00
Hammered brass tray.....	\$2.50
Ice cream set of hand-painted china.....	\$12.00

I listened to Caroline's reading of this list, rather bored and wondering why she appeared so excited.

"Now!" she exclaimed, "what do you think of that?"

"What have we got to do with it?"

"Silly—don't you see? You know how to draw in crayon; I know how to paint in water colors. Why can't we win some of those prizes!"

The idea hit me straight between the eyes—and with so much force that I grabbed the book and began running over the list myself. It was nothing short of inspiration on Caroline's part.

"Don't you think we might win some of them?" she asked, still breathless.

"Some of them!" I replied, now all ablaze with enthusiasm and energy. "We are going to win them all!"

## MODELING MY LIFE

This confidence was a little too much for her. "But how could we! We don't know how to paint on china—or in oils—or how to hammer brass—or carve wood."

"We've got to learn."

"But there's only two months before the fair."

"That's all right. We'll take a couple of lessons in the things we don't know how to do. You learn the china painting. I'll study how to hammer brass and carve wood." My recollection of the power I had shown at the piano inspired me with confidence in my capacity to cope with these last two energetic forms of art. "I suppose there's no use trying for that oil painting of a horse on canvas in a hand-carved frame. I wish we could, though. That carries a twenty-dollar prize. Do you suppose we could learn oil painting in a month?"

Caroline didn't think so and wouldn't hear of my trying; she felt that if we did all the other things and carried off prizes for each of them we ought to be satisfied. I didn't agree with her; nothing short of the whole list would really satisfy me; but for the moment I gave in to my playmate. Yet all the time, that oil painting of a horse on canvas in a hand-carved frame that was to receive a prize of twenty dollars remained steadily before me. Twenty dollars! I had never seen that much money. It was the sort of sum—just thinking of it—that kept me awake at night.

We went to work with an enthusiasm that was made

## TERRE HAUTE

efficient by the thought of those prizes; though the fear of not winning them and being laughed at made us very cautious and secretive. My success with the crayon portrait of mother and child—which wasn't a portrait at all, only a copy of a picture I found in an old almanac—encouraged me to hurry on to the hammered brass tray, which finally evolved into what was supposed to be the head of Medusa—a much mutilated one, and in no way suggestive of the one with which Benvenuto Cellini won his fame. I made such progress that, well before the fair opened, my share of the list was completed. I even attempted the study of pansies on bolting cloth, this copied from a colored print for which I had to pay ten cents to the local stationer. Caroline went in for what might be called the more refined branches of art, fuchsias on velvet, luxuriant sprays of wild roses in water colors and the china ice cream set, which she covered all over with what she insisted were forget-me-nots.

We carried the finished products ourselves to the fair grounds, left them in the division assigned to the art exhibit, said nothing about who had sent them, and hurried away without giving our names. The next week, when the fair opened, we arrived trembling with fear lest the judges had not found our work worthy to be exhibited. Grasping each other by the hand we timidly approached the building and peered in. Suddenly I gave a start, smothered an exclamation and hurried in. There, a long way off—but at that moment

## MODELING MY LIFE

I had eyes that would have rivaled the famous lynx—surrounded by an extensive collection of glass jars filled with home-made peach preserves and plum jelly, and really occupying the place of honor, was my hammered brass tray of the head of Medusa.

I have never since experienced a thrill like that; I never shall; I couldn't. Things like that only come once in a lifetime. Even when I saw my Frog Fountain placed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and my Boy with Fish in the Luxembourg Museum of Paris, I did not have nearly the same sensation of achievement as when, at the county fair of Terre Haute, I stood before that hammered brass tray of the head of Medusa surrounded by home-made peach preserves and plum jelly.

Caroline and I went every day to gloat over our exhibit. Everything we sent had been accepted. And when Saturday came and we found a blue ribbon attached to each article—which meant that we had carried off every single prize—I think we both must have come very near to fainting. We had no peace until we found a catalogue and added up the total amount, which came to fifty dollars. No wonder we ran to the lunch counter and ordered the two largest glasses of pink lemonade to be had. The fact that no one else had gone to the trouble to exhibit any of these prize-winning articles—which of course left the field free of rivalry—did not once enter our thoughts. Besides, we were not looking for honors in those days; we only wanted some-

## TERRE HAUTE

thing neither of us had ever had—a few dollars with which to buy art materials.

This overwhelming success, however, had failed to obliterate the impression that oil painting on canvas of a horse in hand-carved frame had made on me. When Caroline suggested—now that I think of her she must have typified all the pent-up energy of the Middle West of those days—that, as we had carried off all the prizes at the Terre Haute county fair, there was no reason why we shouldn't do the same at other fairs, we immediately went to work to carry out the idea. It might be said that we deliberately went into the prize-winning business. We exhibited—always the same things, among which my hammered head of Medusa acquired considerable more hammering on its journeys—at every county fair we heard of. The result was not as profitable as we had hoped. We did not always win prizes; we never again won the complete series as we had at the beginning; but we made enough at least to pay the express charges to and fro and a few dollars besides. It was in one of these contests that I saw the chance of realizing my ambition of doing the oil painting on canvas of a horse. I had very quietly watched one of the pupils at the Institute painting in oils; it seemed to me to be no trick at all; and it probably wasn't, the way she did it. When I felt that I had mastered this, to me, very simple form of art, I looked about for a picture of a horse to copy. In those days no one ever thought of painting or drawing from nature; one just copied

## MODELING MY LIFE

those hideous colored prints that were got up for students and art classes, thus developing no originality and teaching one to carry on, even perpetuate, the *banal* work of some very second-rate craftsman. In fact, one sees even to-day those same incredible prints being displayed in the windows of shops that sell artists' materials. A law ought to be passed against the sale of them.

It took me some time to find a picture of a horse—at least one in colors; much more time than it did to copy it in oils—and of course on canvas—after it was found. The hand-carved frame also took considerably more time. But at last it was finished—and to my entire satisfaction. It was a wholly impressive piece of work; far ahead of anything Caroline had done, I thought, and somehow much more worthy of admiration than the head of Medusa. Without letting Caroline know that I had done it, or even mentioning it to her, I slipped it into the box we were just getting ready for the Illinois State Fair. You see we were now attacking what we thought were foreign fields. When the box was returned to us after the fair, and we were opening it anxiously to see if there were any attached blue ribbons, Caroline came across this secret effort of mine, looked at it contemptuously and then cast it aside.

"I like their nerve—sending us back a horrible thing like that! How do you suppose they ever got it mixed up with our things!"

It was a terrible blow to me; but without an instant's hesitation, and in equally contemptuous tones I dis-

## TERRE HAUTE

owned my masterpiece; and what is more, I never told her that I had done it.

But these are only gay fragments of those long, dreary years of childhood and youth, which in greater part were made up of a procession of dismal events in which a stepmother, funerals and poverty were the main factors. Two characters rise out of a tangle of memories—distinct and lasting in their influence—my father and Hannah Hussey.

My father was a very quiet man, who said little and had little to do with our home life; which I suppose was quite natural when it is taken into consideration that he had had seven children, a second wife, and was constantly struggling—unsuccessfully too—to keep the wolf from the door. It is expecting too much of mere flesh and blood to carry gaily a burden like that; and he didn't. He moved about quietly, silently and had practically nothing to do with our lives. And yet I knew he was my friend; I felt even in those thoughtless days of childhood that he was the one on whom I could count. Now and then he would do things that were so much more vital than words. When I brought back from the drawing class that crayon horror of a plaster cast of tulips, he didn't say a word; he just looked at it a long time. I had the despairing feeling that he was finding it so bad that he was going to forbid my studying drawing any longer. Instead, still ominously silent, he went out to the woodshed, found a hammer and a nail, returned to the hall, drove the nail in the

## MODELING MY LIFE

wall just over the sofa where he took his daily nap and hung my drawing there. I often found him lying there after dinner looking at my drawing with something in his eyes that touched me very deeply; though when he saw me watching him, he pretended to be asleep. Perhaps I realized he had confidence in me—or hopes for me—or something, I didn't know exactly what. At any rate it drew me to him and ever since then I have carried along with me the knowledge that if we really want to do something for anybody, something kind and encouraging and helpful, we can do it much better with actions than with words. Almost every one is willing to say something pleasant about the efforts of others—that's easy enough; doing things takes a little more energy.

I wish more attention had been given to psychology when I was a child; it would have made human relations simpler; and it might have given me an inkling of what my father meant when he asked me, one day, which I liked better—my teacher at school or the one who taught my Sunday School class. If I had only known what he meant, a tragedy might have been averted. But I hadn't the slightest idea when I answered, without considering the matter seriously, that I thought I preferred my school teacher, that my father was contemplating a very serious step just to give me, a young girl who had lost her mother when she was five, the right sort of home with some gentle influence in it to care for and guide her. When he brought the

## TERRE HAUTE

school teacher home as his wife, I began to understand vaguely what he had meant. But it was too late. And oh, what a difference between a woman as one's school teacher and as one's stepmother!

It was my father who realized, though he never admitted it, that I hated the idea of having to become a school teacher myself, following the footsteps of my eldest sister Martha, who had undertaken that profession. I'm sure he chuckled to himself when I deliberately failed in the high school examinations, writing all the foolish answers I could think of to the questions so that I could not possibly be given a teacher's certificate; and when it came to the real ordeal of my life—nothing has ever come up to that day in actual terror—when I was told that I had to read an essay at the commencement exercises before the entire concentrated mass of Terre Haute parents, I was very much inclined to confess to him the somewhat violent means I was taking to escape that torture.

Just the mere writing of an essay hadn't given me any trouble at all; it seemed to me no more difficult or complicated than it had seemed years before to paint a picture of a horse in oils on canvas. I chose a name which I felt sounded important enough to carry off anything I might say after the title had been read—"Utopia." But the idea of standing on a platform before those hundreds of pairs of parental eyes was something I just couldn't and wouldn't think of.

In despair, and with the fatal day only twenty-four

## MODELING MY LIFE

hours off, I confided my problem to the son of the near-by druggist. He occasionally treated me to lemon sherbet, served at his father's fountain, the favorite concoction of those days, made of crushed ice and some synthetic syrup. My friend listened sympathetically to my story and said he could fix me up in no time.

His assurance made me suspicious. "What do you mean?" I asked.

"The only thing for you to do is to get sick."

"How can I?" I asked, immediately discouraged. As a matter of fact, I don't remember ever having had any of those diseases that other children were always having, not even hives; and the idea of being sick appeared as impossible as reading the essay.

But this evidently did not disturb him. "You just leave it to me," he said mysteriously, and retired behind the counter, returning soon with a small package which he handed to me.

"What is it?" I asked, half in fear, half in hope.

He smiled confidently. "Just take it and see."

"But you must tell me what it is."

"It's nothing—just Garfield Tea."

"Will it put me to sleep?" I already had visions of going into a profound slumber, as Juliette had done, and sleeping straight through the commencement exercises.

"It won't put you to sleep, but I'll guarantee it will put you into a condition that will make it impossible for you to go on the platform and read that essay."

## TERRE HAUTE

I waited until evening, brewed the tea and drank a huge quantity of it; and then I had an opportunity of deciding which was the greater of the two sufferings—mental or physical.

My stepmother must have had a suspicion of what was going on, for the next afternoon she gave me a most efficient antidote to the Garfield Tea; and that night I was led on to the platform, feeling and looking exactly like some old saint who had just been taken from the rack, and forced to read my essay on “Utopia.”

And Hannah Hussey—dear Hannah! It was she who took the place of my real mother. She had been with the family since long before I was born, having arrived straight from Ireland when she was only eight and come directly to us; and as the years had broadened her figure and whitened her hair and the family fortunes had dwindled to almost nothing, she stopped on with us, never complaining, even of my father’s fatal second marriage, and never saying a word when her meager monthly stipend was not forthcoming. She just gradually developed from nurse to cook and housemaid until there was nothing she did not do. She had a deep, comfortable bosom and a gentle voice. And she not only loved me, but told me so: which my father never did. When I came back on a vacation from my first year in Cincinnati at the Academy of Art, it was Hannah who had a present for me—a crisp five-dollar bill which she had spent the whole year in saving to give to me. Dear Hannah Hussey—I send you my greet-

## MODELING MY LIFE

ings from across the seas, and all my love. You are one of the few pleasant memories of a very sad childhood.

The rest of the family—my brothers and sisters—had varying influences on me. One sister, several years older than I, who went to parties in what I thought were ravishing organdy dresses, caused me as much wonder as the flowers God had painted; but she died very young and left me with the feeling that the most beautiful person I was ever to know had gone out of my life. Another sister was off supporting herself by teaching school. One brother was a traveling salesman and only showed himself under the parental roof every few months. And another brother, a year older than I, played the part of Fate at a moment when I might have swerved from my original idea of being an artist. It was at about the age of twelve when, thrown with the conglomerate mass of public school children, I found myself much more sympathetic with boys than girls. I liked the things boys did; and I soon saw that I could do those things just as well as they did. I could skin the cat, hang by my toes, turn handsprings in a way that Elsie Janis never did, and as for skating on ice in the moonlight—no one could outdistance me. When the boys got up their Easter circus, held in the vacant lot that is now covered by Terre Haute's proudest skyscraper, I played the leading part in every turn—even to directing the making of tubs of lemonade which would pay the expenses we had undergone. For the

## TERRE HAUTE

time being the copying of the illustrations from the Longfellow books and the wood carving and the hammered brass completely lost their fascination. I was now wholly obsessed with a compelling need of being continually in motion and risking my neck every hour of the day. Thank Heaven I had that period! It strengthened me and prepared me for the long struggle that was to come; it gave me a constitution that has been able to meet and endure endless days of discouragement and hunger. Oh, yes—I know what it is to be hungry! At one time in New York my daily diet consisted for weeks of a bottle of milk and a tin of baked beans. I can never see a tin of baked beans now without having an alarming sinking sensation. If I hadn't had that athletic training I should never have been able to get through some experiences. Artists, and especially sculptors, need as much physical strength as any other workers. Good work and inspiration are rarely arrived at unless the body is functioning healthily.

My brother Charlie thought my athletic tendencies were infra dig for a girl. He told me so one day.

"You are making a regular tomboy of yourself. The other boys don't like you that way. They say you want to run all their games—and they don't want you to. If you'll take my advice, you'll cut out all this silly gymnastic stuff at once."

And what seems strange to me now—I did. I renounced the circus, top-spinning, marble rolling, everything except ice skating—which was considered permis-

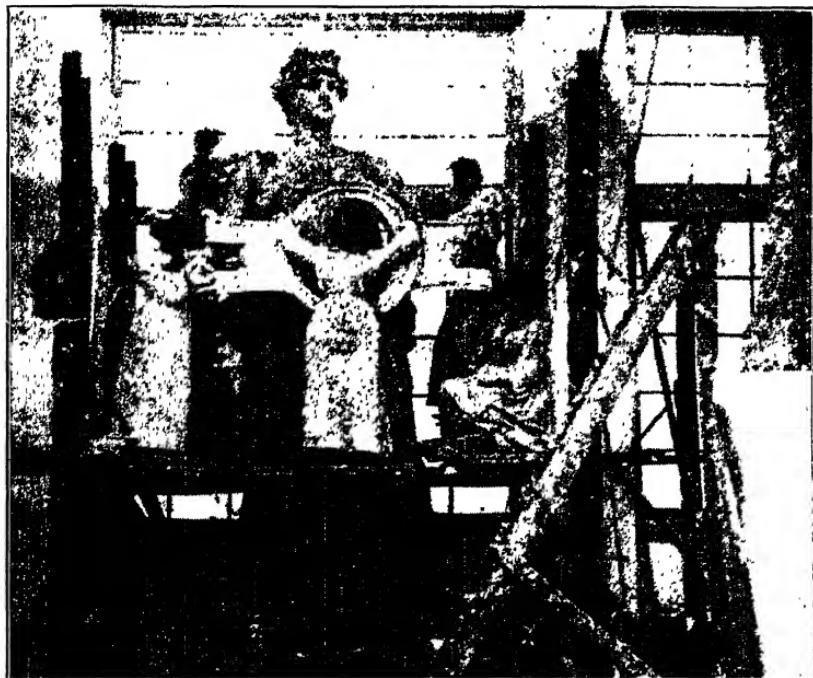
## MODELING MY LIFE

sible for girls. But the influences of that formative period still cling to me; some of my habits and diversions are hardly what would be called strictly feminine—even in this advanced age. I much prefer severely tailored clothes to fussy dresses; I should like to drive every motorcar I get into; I will not be bothered with housekeeping; and as for smoking—well, some one once told me that the first note in an international reputation was struck on the day I smoked a cigarette in the sacred precincts of the Saddle and Cycle Club—the first woman to smoke in public in Chicago, it was said afterwards. I should have been frightfully embarrassed if I had known it at the time. My host offered me a cigarette as a joke after lunch. I just naturally accepted one and smoked it.

I was visiting at that time some people who I thought were extremely broad-minded—in fact they were so, for those twenty years ago. They allowed me to smoke cigarettes but were very shy about having it known. I had usually to lock myself in my own room. Once, however, downing their prejudices—not really against smoking but on account of their dread of what other people would say of me—I was given a cigarette just after luncheon in the dining-room when, quite unexpectedly, the Presbyterian minister was announced. As he was an intimate friend he was shown directly into the dining-room; but before he had crossed the threshold my host had jerked the cigarette from my lips and transferred it to his own—forgetting that he



JANET SCUDDER AT WORK AT THE WORLD'S FAIR,  
CHICAGO



FREDERICK MACMONNIES IN HIS STUDIO, PARIS



## TERRE HAUTE

had one already in his other hand. The minister must have been surprised to see a man smoking two cigarettes at one time. Thus was the situation saved, and my good name preserved. If I had worn my hair short then, as I do now, I'm sure my reputation would have been irreparably shattered. Other days—other customs!

Not only did I start life in the midst of a very dismal poverty, but I began it also with a name that would have damned the most promising of infant prodigies. And right here I would like to say that a name has a great deal more to do with an artist's success than the world realizes; in fact I am almost inclined to go to an extreme and say it is half of success. A good name, a romantic name, a distinguished name, a strange name, a resonant name, even a queer name, is quite invaluable. Don't you think Rudyard Kipling, Anatole France, Eleonora Duse, Sarah Bernhardt, were helped along considerably by their names? Would they have had as great a success if they had been named James Brown or Thomas Smith or Mary Jones? Of course I'll admit there are exceptions, but they are the sort that prove the rule. My advice to all struggling artists—and who of us is not struggling?—is to give much time and thought to the choice of a name; and when it is once found, discard the one given you by thoughtless and inconsiderate parents—no matter how sentimental you may feel about it—and adopt that new name, become it and do your best to live up to all it suggests.

But this poor little me—handicapped the very first

## MODELING MY LIFE

day of my entrance into this world of struggle and turmoil with four—yes, four!—of the most awful names that were ever got together, each mounting in crescendo fashion to a finale that should have left me crushed at the very start. Netta Deweze Frazee Scudder! Perhaps you won't believe it, but it's true. That is the name—or the series—given me by one of my mother's very dear friends.

It seems that my mother wanted to name me for this friend, whose first name was Netta, but the friend insisted that if I were given her name at all, it should be given in full, even including the surname of her husband. After my mother had been bullied—I'm sure she must have been—into accepting this decision, the friend attempted to soften her crime by presenting me with a silver knife, fork and spoon engraved with my name in full. The length of the series evidently tested the local silversmith's cleverness, and he overcame the difficulty only by engraving Netta Deweze on one side of the handle and adding Frazee Scudder on the other.

The family naturally did not attempt to call me by this overpowering collection of names; they very soon compromised with Nettie and usually Net—and dear Hannah had her own version of Little Nettie. I carried the whole group with me until I was eighteen; in fact until I entered the Cincinnati Academy of Art; and there an incident occurred which caused the heavy burden to fall from my shoulders and abolished the stigma forever. But that belongs to the wonderful period when

## TERRE HAUTE

I discovered the world held the thrilling adventure of modeling in clay.

Besides being queered at the getaway—as the racing experts would put it—with a name like that, I was burdened with the background of a long line of religious ancestors. Though this, I have sometimes thought since, may have been fortunate; for it is my belief that it is impossible for a series of generations to go along working and thinking and using up emotions on one subject. Those special brain cells necessary to that subject become exhausted and leave the new brain just created without any power to continue work in the same direction. Therefore, the new brain must strike out in an entirely new direction, using cells that have long lain dormant, and with a very good chance of developing some new talent or at least fresh energies. This all sounds philosophical—which I have no ambition to be—but I'm trying to explain tendencies in me which the rest of the family thought were somewhat bewildering. It all boils down to this—to give a few simple examples to prove my theory. Did you ever know a clergyman whose son was a good clergyman—or a painter whose son had any real talent—or a singer whose daughter could sing as well as her mother—or a novelist who gave to the world another novelist? That's the point I'm trying to make. It is easy to understand that, for me, it was only natural, with that long line of Scudder missionaries (medical missionaries, I hasten to say) of the Presbyterian Church using up brain cells in the

## MODELING MY LIFE

proselytizing of savages, to find a whole group of my cells—the religious ones—filled with dry batteries. So, nature coming to the rescue, counseled me to go ahead and use the cells the missionaries had never called into action.

I confess that I never knew anything about my religious forefathers until I was asked to become a member of the National Society Colonial Daughters of American Founders and Patriots. Up to this time I had taken it for granted that I was Scotch-Irish—as many Americans are inclined to think themselves. But when I wrote to an uncle in Kentucky to give me the necessary information about the family, he replied in a most extensive and detailed fashion.

This letter informs me that two brothers, John and Thomas Scudder, came over in 1635; one of these, Thomas, was a man of such great piety that he became known as “Goodman” Scudder; and one of his descendants, when graduating from Princeton, was pronounced by the faculty to be “very devout.” It was this one who eventually responded to the advertisement of the American Board of Missions for “a pious physician for India who could combine the qualities of missionary and physician.” He was accepted; a farewell sermon was preached in the Old South Church, Boston, and on June 18, 1819, he sailed away with his wife for Calcutta, having the distinction of being the first missionary to be sent out from America. There were other members of the family who went into the missionary field—it was

## TERRE HAUTE

apparently a sort of passion with them—though my immediate ancestors remained at home and spent their time migrating more and more towards the Middle West. My grandfather moved from Princeton, New Jersey, to Kentucky; and my father, after he was married, settled in Terre Haute, where I was born. On the whole it is a fairly satisfactory—and wholly Anglo-Saxon—record to present when one is going through the agony of obtaining a passport; though I do catch myself wondering, every now and then, if a love of adventure didn't have something to do with carrying so many Scudders into foreign parts—that same love of adventure that carried me from Terre Haute to Chicago, from Chicago to Paris, and from Paris to Rome.

I must confess, though, I am rather glad I didn't know all about that background of pious strains until it was too late to do anything about it; there might have been rather troublesome moments when just the mere consciousness of religious ancestors would have made me feel tremendously guilty. I'm sure, if I had known it when I was studying in MacMonnies' Paris studio, the only woman among a number of men who were working from nude models, I should have seen the ghosts of the whole congregation of missionaries rising up in their wrath to denounce me.

Recreating the incidents of that early period of my life brings to mind an event that took place after many years of wandering. I found myself possessed by an irresistible longing to return to my native state. In

## MODELING MY LIFE

spite of my sad and dismal childhood in Terre Haute, I had a very deep affection for my native town. Perhaps that unhappy period was just what I had needed to spur me on to accomplishment. Possibly if I had had a happy, normal life, with love and tenderness surrounding me, I should have been content to go on dreaming of what I might do if I could ever find the time. Ambition has always seemed to me to be the result of difficulties; a very pleasant life seldom arouses it in any one. At any rate, when some success had come, I had a great desire to go back to Indiana and see how it looked after so many years had rolled by. I had met a woman in New York who, when she heard of my proposed visit to my native state, invited me to stop off in Indianapolis to stay with her. I accepted, expecting to pass a few quiet days with her before going on to Terre Haute; but hardly had I stepped off the train when I found my visit was going to be anything but quiet. My friend, with the kindest intentions in the world, had decided that I should be boosted as one of the state's most distinguished products; dinners, luncheons and teas had been arranged; and a sort of public reception was to be given in my honor. This was wholly unexpected and wholly terrifying. I was born shy and have consistently remained so, in spite of tremendous efforts to overcome it and the conviction that it is very bad policy to be timid. The thought of being made a sort of seventh wonder to be stared at and talked to and about was more than I could bear. If there had been any way

## TERRE HAUTE

of getting out of Indianapolis gracefully—or ungracefully for that matter—I would have done it at once. But there wasn't; I had to grin and bear it and see it through. And the agony of shyness of those two days reached a climax when, standing by my hostess and shaking hands with what appeared to me to be an endless line of people, an old gentleman stepped forward and said with a burr in his voice that I had almost forgotten and yet which made my heart warm towards him:

“Now, Miss Scudder-r-r-r—if you have a few moments—will you kindly tell us some incidents of your-r-r-r ear-r-r-ly childhood.”

This visit to Indianapolis upset me so much that I hadn't the moral or physical courage to go on to Terre Haute, from which I was already receiving telegrams and letters and clippings from papers which announced my imminent arrival in headlines that ran straight across the front page. I learned that when I arrived in my home town there would be a brass band at the station to meet me—and I was not up to standing the demonstration. I telegraphed that I had suddenly been called back to New York on very important business and that, unfortunately, my visit home would have to be postponed. I felt that I was not important enough to pose on the pedestal prepared for me. Always I have hopes of going back some day and being really worthy of so much attention. There is nothing else to tell of those first eighteen years of my life, unless it is the night I left Terre Haute to go to Cincinnati to enter the Acad-

## MODELING MY LIFE

emy of Art. How this was ever arranged, I never knew. My father just came home one day—it was during the latter part of the summer—told me to pack my trunk and get ready to leave. I knew what the expenses would be, for I had looked into them and thought them quite impossible. The tuition at the Academy was only twenty dollars for the whole season, but beyond this was the expense of a boarding house and incidentals—a letter from a friend living in Cincinnati had put these latter expenses, at the very lowest, as being four dollars a week for board and one dollar for incidentals.

As soon as I knew it was an actual fact that I was to leave, I no longer lived in Terre Haute; my thoughts ran ahead—sometimes I felt that my body had, too—into that splendid future that was already mine. Nothing was real any longer except the study, the work, the success that was so surely beckoning me on. There was never the least hesitation or doubt or regret. I knew perfectly well that I was following my fate line.

My father walked with me to the station, as quiet and speechless as he had always been. It was a calm, September morning; and as the station was only a few blocks away we did not have one of those large hacks in which I had so often watched other people—and envied them—going and coming from the trains. I remember feeling just the least twinge of regret that my father had not thought my departure sufficiently important to engage a hack for the occasion.

When he had found a place for me in the day coach,

## TERRE HAUTE

he leaned over and kissed me, saying, "Good-by, Nettie. God bless you!" and left me before the train had pulled out.

A few minutes later I was on my way—alone—to find the world and myself.

## II

### CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

THE excitement of arriving in Cincinnati had nothing to do with the fact that it was my first visit to a large city; it was all due to that Academy of Art. All the details of being met by an uncle I had never seen and taken to a boarding house on Walnut Hills, where arrangements had been made for me to stay, made no impression. My eyes and my heart were straining in the direction of that seat of learning where something within me—I wasn't yet quite sure what—was going to burst into full bloom.

The first glimpse of the building sent a chill through me; I suppose it would even now if I should see it again; it was of gray stone, ominous, cold—exactly the sort of building you see from train windows and are told is the state penitentiary or lunatic asylum. And the director, to whom I applied the next morning, was no more assuring in appearance than the building; I still think of him as the biggest, hairiest, severest person I have ever met. I was shown into his office and left standing to meet his searching eyes alone.

“Well, young lady, what is it you want to do?”

I avoided his eyes, changed from one foot to the other and clasped my hands.

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

“I—I want to study art.”

He probably smiled; I only remember that I didn’t.  
“What branch?”

This was almost too much to bear. I stammered again: “I—I don’t know.”

“We teach all branches of art in this academy.”

“Then—I—suppose I’d better study them all.”

“Wouldn’t that be something of an undertaking for so young a girl as you?”

I lifted my head a little less shyly. “I’m eighteen.”

“Yes—but still—” I think he was finding me as difficult a subject as I was finding him. “Suppose you begin with drawing, see how you get along at that and then later, perhaps, go on to something else.”

I nodded, glad of anything that would get me away from his disturbing presence; but a few minutes later, when I was facing the thin, frowning countenance of the drawing school teacher, I began to think the director had a rather sympathetic face. She received me even more abruptly and when I timidly announced I wanted to enter the drawing class drew a large book towards her, dipped pen in ink and again shot a glance at me.

“What is your name?”

“Netta Scudder.”

Her glance was now nothing less than annihilating.  
“We don’t use foolish family pet names in the Academy.  
I want your real name.”

I swallowed hard and repeated: “Netta Scudder.”

“Netta isn’t a name.”

## MODELING MY LIFE

“It’s mine.”

“No—it’s some sort of an abbreviation or nickname. Can’t you remember what you were christened?”

“Oh—you want it all!” I breathed a little more easily. “Netta Deweze Frazee Scudder.”

This either satisfied her or overwhelmed her, it was difficult to say which; at any rate she said no more, wrote down my full name, gave me a list of things I should buy for the drawing class, told me the hours and dismissed me as abruptly as she had received me.

But all that day her comment and surprise and insult to my name absorbed my attention to the exclusion of new surroundings. What was the matter with it, anyway? No one had ever before suggested that it was unusual. Now that I began to think about it, I realized that I had no fondness for it myself; the more I thought of it the more foolish it sounded. No—it wouldn’t do; I saw that quite plainly. But what would take its place? Should I use Deweze or Frazee instead? They were even worse. I went over this problem for several days until, running across the name of Antoinette, I decided that was what I was looking for. Probably Netta was an abbreviation of it anyway. Yes—Antoinette was charming. When later I entered the water color class I gave my name as Antoinette and had the satisfaction of seeing it written down without either comments or insults. But by the time I entered the wood-carving class I had reached the conclusion that Antoinette was a bit frivolous for me. In search of

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

something more suitable, I began studying the dictionary—that part of it which gives proper names; that was what I wanted—a proper name; and there was something about Antoinette that seemed to me not altogether proper. I entered the oil-painting class under the name of Jeanette; though I knew I hadn't yet reached the perfect form. Several weeks later I discovered the Scotch modification of Jeanette—Janet. I tried this over, speaking it aloud, writing it on a piece of paper and sticking it up on the wall. I looked at it before I went to sleep; it was the first thing I saw in the morning; and when I finally entered the modeling class I gave this new name with considerable satisfaction. It had a certain dignity and simplicity about it; it suggested—at least to me—seriousness and strength; and the shifting of the accent from the net to the Jan was just what I was looking for. I finally reached the conclusion that Janet Scudder was the name that suggested something I wanted to be; and it has remained my name ever since.

All the time my name was going through this process of evolution I was working in the drawing class doing geometrical solids on large pieces of manila paper. It wasn't exciting work, but I plodded along conscientiously and have always been very thankful that I did. A sculptor must know how to draw even if modern painters think it unnecessary; and just working day after day getting the angles and curves and bodies of those solids at my finger tips has been of inestimable advantage to

## MODELING MY LIFE

me. There is something fundamental about drawing from geometrical solids; you are working from the outside in—not from the inside out. Somehow it rather suggests to me the need of a writer to know how to spell and punctuate before he can compose a really finished sentence.

From these solids I went on to drawing detached features—feet, hands, ears, noses, eyes—all from plaster casts; then came anatomical figures eight feet high. Three months were supposed to be spent on each anatomical drawing; three months on the front view, three months on the back view, and three months on the profile—the drawings being eight feet in length, as the figure. Every subcutaneous muscle was shown on the plaster figure, and we were supposed to reproduce them in the drawing. Connected with this work were other studies of anatomy. We had to read books on the subject and attend lectures; we even had to be present at the dissecting of a corpse, at which time we were shown muscles and ligaments and layers of flesh as they actually exist.

I studied anatomy prodigiously and have found sculpture immeasurably more alluring in consequence. I understand subcutaneous muscles now, know their sources and their effect upon each other. I learned all their names and could rattle them off without an effort, though now I seem to recall only one—gastrocnemius. This particular one remained in my memory probably

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

only because I have had some personal experience with this muscle, particularly when playing tennis.

Towards the end of the course in anatomy—thank Heaven it was not at the beginning!—the teacher wished the students to examine very closely an eyeball—a real one!—that he was lecturing about and had the horrible object sent forth through the audience, each student passing it by hand to his neighbor. When I saw it getting nearer and nearer to me and realized that I was supposed to hold it in my hand, I rose abruptly and hurried from the lecture hall. That ended my lessons in anatomy. I was never able to go into that lecture hall again; and incidentally this has a great deal to do with my non-entrance into the life classes in Cincinnati, for I never was able to screw up my courage sufficiently to endure the complete ordeal of those anatomy demonstrations and to pass the examination which allowed the student to commence the work with the nude. At that time in the Cincinnati Art Academy a most rigid routine was obligatory. After all, I'm not sorry that I left off anatomy at that point. I don't believe artists should be subjected to experiences that harden the sensibilities; without sensibility no fine work can ever be done.

While all this was going on I was constantly faced with the problem of finding a self-supporting profession; and just learning how the body was made and how to draw it didn't seem, at that time, to promise much in the way of making a living—and that necessity was

## MODELING MY LIFE

always in the back of my mind. I wasn't at all sure that my father would be able to keep me at the Academy for more than two years. I must make hay while the sun was shining. And making hay took the form very quickly of wood-carving. It was the form of artistic development in the United States that was most popular at that moment; every one was buying wood-carved articles; every mother felt that her table was incomplete if she did not have a carved wood bread trencher on which she could slice bread; and a library without hand-carved book racks was not a library at all. It was the sort of artistic endeavor that was just then quite profitable.

I plunged head and heels into wood-carving. My efficiency progressed by leaps and bounds. I scorned small bits of work and attacked a whole mantel-piece, carved up one side and down the other and all across the front with grapes that stood out in relief as no real ones would ever have the courage to do. It was the sort of thing that would have taken Leonardo da Vinci's whole class years to do. I am not suggesting that their finished work would not have been very different from mine; but I was quite happy over it and had the satisfaction—and pride too undoubtedly—of selling my mantel-piece at once for the huge sum of sixty dollars. I would give anything if I could find it now; it is undoubtedly ornamenting, in a most flamboyant way, some prosperous wheat grower's mansion in Ohio at this very moment.

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

But sixty dollars! Unheard-of sum! Why—that would pay for fifteen weeks at the boarding house where I was having trouble persuading the landlady that I was accustomed to two sheets on my bed instead of one. Incidentally, I never persuaded her. I had to move before I got two sheets. A dazzling future seemed now before me; and yet, even with the satisfaction of material success, I knew wood-carving was not what I was struggling towards.

I next entered an interior decorating class and gave some time to designing wall paper; then came water colors; and then—but why go on enumerating all the departments of that Academy of Art? Suffice it to say that I entered every class in existence and was working every hour of the day and often in the evening; and yet, for some strange reason, I had not discovered the one class that was to mean so much to me.

This discovery came about quite casually. I had noticed from time to time very untidy-looking students going in and out of a room on the basement floor; I hadn't an idea what the white stuff was that covered their aprons nor what the work was that they were doing —plaster and clay meant nothing to me then. One day, seeing all these strange-looking students go out and leave the door open after them, I crept in to see what on earth could have been going on in that room. It was a bare room with high windows, much like all the others; but what caught my attention at once was that the floor and tables and walls were covered with plaster casts. An-

## MODELING MY LIFE

other drawing class, I thought; but there were no easels or quantities of paper and pencils about. It must be some form of art that I had not heard about. I approached an object covered with a damp cloth. I gingerly raised the cloth and found a wet clay bust in the process of formation. I next found a mound of soft clay. I picked up a handful, rolled it between my fingers and suddenly felt an almost overwhelming delight course through me. The feel of that clay in my hand was entirely different from anything I had ever experienced before. Just the mere sensual part of it, the touch, seemed to fire me with something tremendously stimulating.

Gradually it came over me that I was standing in the sculpture class room; and with this knowledge came a flaring resentment that no one had ever told me it existed. There I had been studying all those other things for months and not even hearing about this branch of art. I rushed upstairs, entered the secretary's room and spent an impatient half hour awaiting his return in order to announce that I wanted to enter the modeling class at once—which I did under my now permanent name, Janet Scudder.

The teacher received me indifferently, no doubt considering me like many of the others who entered that field for a few months and, curiosity allayed, returned to the gentler arts. I was told to begin modeling—copying—a plaster cast of a foot, always a difficult thing to do even after years of experience. But the feel

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

of that wet clay in my hands was sufficient joy to overcome any moments of discouragement. I neglected everything else—even the money-making wood-carving—to work in the modeling room. I spent weeks on that foot, glancing only now and then at some shelves which were piled up with casts of faces and one or two figures. When, oh, when, would I be allowed to copy them! Two of them held special inspiration for me—a mask of a smiling boy and the head of a man. When I eventually copied these two favorites and carried them home with me, I told my friends that the boy had no name, but the head of the man was a portrait of King Lear. I didn't know any better—and no one in the class apparently did; at least no one took the trouble to tell me what these casts were. It was not until several years later, when I was wandering through the Louvre, that I recognized that boy as being Rude's Neapolitan Fisher Boy; and still later, when standing spellbound before the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, whom should I meet looking down at me from the Victory group, by the same artist, but that face that I had so long thought was a portrait of King Lear!

I cite this as an instance of the indifference of teachers of those days. Why weren't we told and encouraged and stimulated with the stories of the casts we were copying and their creators? Think how inspiring it would have been to a young student in modeling to be told that he was copying the work of one of the greatest French sculptors, an artist who had been

## MODELING MY LIFE

awarded all the groups on the Arc de Triomphe and who, through political influence, is only permitted to do one of them—though that one was admitted by the whole world to be the finest war monument in existence. Stories like this go a long way in firing the imagination of students; they make the work under way an adventure, romantic, dramatic; they lift it at once from the commonplace and put it in the realms of the ideal.

As I say, I worked on that clay foot for weeks and weeks; as a matter of fact I very likely would still be working on it if it hadn't been for the appearance one day of a most perfectly tailor-made girl with a really lovely head. She blew into the class room one afternoon when I was there entirely alone, asked for the instructor and was on the point of going out when she happened to glance at the foot I was still struggling over.

"How long did it take you to do that?" she asked.  
"I've been at it three weeks," I replied.

"Three weeks! Aren't you ever going to cast it?"

I blushed furiously. To be perfectly honest, I didn't know what she meant. I took refuge in saying I didn't know how to cast it.

"Would you like me to show you?"

"But—ought I? Would they let me?"

She glanced round and smiled. "No one's here. Let's do it."

She picked up a blouse some one had left hanging

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

over a chair, carefully covered her pretty dress and went efficiently to work to cast my foot. She evidently knew what she was about, so I stood off and stared at her in amazement.

She first looked about for a long piece of stout thread, which, when found, she laid very carefully down the center of my clay foot. Then she went to a corner of the room where basins and barrels of plaster and water were kept, filled a basin half full of water, dropped a small blue ball in it which colored the water lightly, sifted into this several handfuls of plaster which she let flow slowly through her fingers. When the plaster had settled down under the water, she took a large spoon and began stirring it from the bottom. After the bubbles had all disappeared, the basin was carried to my clay foot and my new and most capable friend—much to my consternation—began throwing little handfuls of the plaster between the toes, and finally all over the foot, until my work of weeks was entirely hidden from view in a thin coat of blue plaster. While this was hardening she very carefully pulled up the thread so that a small open seam was made, running down the center of the plaster. The process was continued with another mixture of clay, this time white, though in adding this second coat the seam was never covered. When this second coat was quite hard, she took a chisel and worked gently along the edges of the seam until the plaster fell apart leaving two empty parts—the mold of my foot. These pieces were washed thoroughly, soaked, oiled, tied

## MODELING MY LIFE

together with an opening left at the top and finally another mixture of quite liquid plaster was poured in until the empty center was filled.

"Now—we'll leave it until to-morrow," my amazingly accomplished friend said, covering the whole mass with a cloth. "I'll drop in about noon and we'll see what luck we've had." And before I could say anything or thank her or tell her how wonderful I thought she was, she had disappeared.

The next morning I was afraid to remove the cloth by myself. I awaited impatiently the arrival of what I was sure now was a famous sculptor who had appeared out of the void and so suddenly returned to it. She came at noon, soon found a hammer and chisel and began chipping away the white plaster and then, more carefully, the blue; there, at last, gleaming at me in all the glory of fresh white plaster was my first piece of sculpture.

There are no words that would express convincingly my sensations when I saw a plaster cast of my work there before me. It recalled vibrantly my hammered brass head of Médusa carrying off the blue ribbon with the peach preserves and the plum jelly. And that pretty girl in the lovely clothes! She was a rather wonderful experience, too, especially when she took me off with her that afternoon to her studio—her own studio!—where she modeled in all the privacy of her own home and gave tea parties—I have a suspicion that this was the more important and interesting part of being an

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

artist to her—as it is with many local art celebrities. It was a new phase of life to me, one I had not even heard of; and she was the first of that type that I was to meet all along my rocky path that led towards art, the type that we must not criticize too much, for though they never do anything important themselves, they make pleasant little breaks in the drudgery of real artists' lives; they give the young lion cubs tea, they sometimes go farther and give them luncheons and dinners and they cheer them up a bit by making them think they will arrive some day. I suppose these art patrons might be called the modern development of the early Medicean idea when the rich gave the struggling artist a lift, a square meal and a remunerative order.

The real master of the modeling class came once a week to look at our work and criticize it. He went, to us, by the name of Professor, a rather oldish Italian named Ribisso, whom the Academy considered a blazing light of genius because of a commission he was at work on, an equestrian statue of General Grant which was to be placed in Lincoln Park in Chicago. After I had been taken to his studio and had seen this statue in clay, marveling over the wonder of such a mammoth work, my future suddenly appeared before me, definite and clear-cut; nothing but a sculptor who confined his work to equestrian statues would do for me. I even went so far as to interpret that oil painting of a horse on canvas as being a divine demonstration which had come to show me in which direction my talents lay.

## MODELING MY LIFE

Dear old Professor Ribisso! He probably never knew what he meant in my life. And how intently he would watch me at work, always criticizing and approving and encouraging in his gentle way! Once, when he came in and found me modeling with my fingers a statuette of a horse, I felt very guilty and tried to find one of the little wooden tools with which he always modeled.

“Perhaps you are right,” he said, seeing my confusion, “to use your fingers instead of instruments. They are much more sensitive.”

I was delighted with his sympathetic acceptance of what I had discovered for myself; and for once overcoming my shyness with him I went further and asked him a question.

“Professor—will I ever be a sculptor?”

“You are on your way to being one now.”

“But I mean a real sculptor—a great one—like you?”

I can still see the flash of enthusiasm in his eyes. He took my hands in his—both his and mine were sticky with clay—and held them while he looked straight into my eyes.

“I’m going to tell you something. You’ve got it in you—the feeling for clay—the understanding—the—well—whatever you want to call it! One of these days you will be a much greater sculptor than I am. You are going way beyond me.”

This was entirely too much for me. If I had been the crying sort I should have burst out right there in the classroom; instead, I washed the clay off my hands,

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

folded up my blouse, put on my hat and went out and walked and walked—I hadn't the slightest idea where. Some one who knew had told me that I had it in me!

This carried me through all the rest of the season on wings. My feet never again touched ground—even when I got an order to do another mantel-piece, this time covered not only with grapes but also with acanthus leaves and dogwood, with a bowknot thrown in now and then just to keep any spot from being left uncarved; in fact, as long as wood-carving would furnish me with the means to continue the study of sculpture, I was willing and glad to continue doing it with an energy that amounted to fury.

Even when the summer vacation came and the Academy closed and I had to return home to go through some experiences that were actually more dismal than I had yet passed through, I kept those words going at white heat all the time. I wouldn't let them get out of my consciousness. "One of these days you will be a much greater sculptor than I am. You are going way beyond me."

When I reached home that summer I found many changes—all for the worse. The family fortunes had completely disappeared. Hannah, old faithful Hannah, had been dismissed; my eldest sister had married and gone away; my playmate brother, Charlie, was drowned that year while swimming. My father and his wife and myself were the only ones in the house—a house never gay and now dismal beyond words with only the bed-

## MODELING MY LIFE

rooms and the kitchen opened. My stepmother did all the work and cooked and served our meals in the kitchen, while I did what I could about the house and added to the slender income by giving some lessons in wood-carving. Then—as a climax to a situation that was already hopeless—my father announced one morning that he would not get up that day; he repeated this decision the next day and the next; and in two weeks he died—of no illness whatever, the doctor said, adding that he evidently had no desire to live any longer. No desire to live any longer! Those words of the doctor made more impression on me than my father's death. Nothing I have ever heard since seems to me to express so poignantly complete despair. No desire to live any longer! I was not able to visualize what was meant then; I can't even now. Not to want to go on living is incredible to me. Life is entirely too full of excitement and adventure—just the mere living of it—ever to think of voluntarily giving it up.

I thought my father's death would surely mean the end of all my ambitions, so far as further study in Cincinnati went; how he was ever able to send me there was never explained; but now that he was gone I supposed I must abandon all hope of returning to the Academy that autumn. But though life may be a fairly continuous gray, it is rarely all black, as that summer was. I still look back on it with a shudder. Then, as is invariably the case, the silver lining began to show through ominous clouds. My eldest brother, now mar-

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

ried and living in Chicago, took pity on me and offered to pay for my next season at the Academy in Cincinnati.

This third year probably I made some progress—one usually advances in some direction—though now that I think of it, it seems to have been almost a waste of time. I really learned very little. Everything there must have been frightfully dull and wanting in anything that developed originality or personality. Perhaps this was due to the fact that the Academy was run and directed almost entirely on Munich art school traditions. I went on modeling, with now and then help and encouragement from Professor Ribisso; but on the whole it seems to have been a time given in great measure to that ever-present wood-carving which helped out my living expenses. I was sure the fates or the devil, or whatever my evil influences are, were determined to make and keep me a wood-carver.

At the end of the second term and with another ghastly summer facing me, my brother once more came to the rescue. He wrote that if I would come to Chicago, help his wife a bit with the housekeeping and the new baby, I could live with them and surely find something to do in my chosen profession.

My chosen profession? What was it, anyway—wood-carving? At first Chicago said it was. Soon after I arrived there I landed a job that was to me extraordinarily remunerative—a position as wood-carver in a factory at one hundred dollars a month. And I must

## MODELING MY LIFE

have been pretty good at that job, for they gave me a room to myself and were apparently pleased with my work. I went along blithely carving grapes and dogwood and acanthus leaves for several weeks; helping my sister-in-law with the cooking and the baby; and on the whole probably happier than I had ever been before. I was at last self-supporting.

An alarm clock in my room was set for five o'clock in the morning. From bed I would dash into the kitchen, start the fire in the range, put the water on to boil, then rush back to dress. After I had made the coffee, prepared an enormous quantity of oatmeal—the amount of oatmeal I ate for breakfast during those healthy days would keep me going a week now—and eaten my breakfast, I would steal silently out of the house so as not to awaken the baby, and arrive at the factory at seven-thirty sharp. I often think of those days now, particularly when young men and women—sometimes old ones, too—complain bitterly that, though they know they have talent for the Fine Arts, they cannot study because they have no financial backing. Of late years a number of people seem to think that I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth, that I am one of the favored few who could afford to follow a natural bent, while they, poor dears! have had to suppress their artistic inclinations because no one would give them a million dollars with which to study art.

In the midst of my factory job and my happy life there suddenly appeared a walking delegate of the

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

wood-carvers' union of Chicago; and, living up to his name, he walked straight into my private room, followed by the somewhat slinking figure of the foreman, and pointed an accusing finger at me, quite innocently at work.

"What is that?" he asked, with the accusing finger still held in mid-air.

"One of our best carvers," the foreman replied.

"A woman?"

The foreman nodded.

"That won't do," the delegate continued. "We haven't got any women workers in our union—and what's more we won't have them. That woman's got to get out."

By this time my fighting instincts—which usually lie dormant until goaded into action—rose within me. I stopped work and faced the walking delegate.

"Women have as much right to support themselves as men. You can't stop my working here."

He nodded to the foreman to leave him alone with me. I began to feel less combative. The man's appearance and manner were far from reassuring. When we were alone he came nearer and lowered his voice.

"Now—look here. You're a nice-looking girl and I believe you've got a kind heart." This beginning was entirely different from anything I had expected. "And I don't believe you want to throw seven hundred men out of work and make their wives and babies suffer. Do you?"

## MODELING MY LIFE

There was only one answer to that. But what was he driving at?

“Well—that’s what’ll happen if the boss of this factory don’t fire you. The whole wood-carving union will go on strike to-morrow morning. Now—it’s up to you. What are you going to do?”

I went to the foreman, asked if this was all true, was told that it was—and left at once.

Another definitely black period, looking for something, anything, to do and literally finding nothing! Once, in despair, I went into a little restaurant which had a sign up “Help Wanted” and asked for a job. They replied to my question by demanding to know if I could scrub floors and wait on the table. I would have taken that job—I’ve never felt that any honest labor was belittling—but I had to think of my hands. They must not be hardened and put out of commission for clay modeling. Scrubbing floors would have unfitted me for sculpture. A sculptor must always keep his hands sensitive and supple; they are as important to him as to a musician. So I left the restaurant and continued my vain search for employment, walking miles and miles a day to save carfare and, being usually too far away to return to the flat for lunch, had to content myself with a five-cent glass of ice cream soda. It can be quite filling—when you can’t afford anything more!

Again a silver lining, this time in the form of Lorado

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

Taft, who I heard was employing assistants in his studio! It took me about ten minutes after I had heard this to reach the top story of an office building, where I was immediately admitted into what turned out to be a series of studios filled with clay figures in all sizes and conditions, scaffolds, ladders and a group of several young women working under the direction of Mr. Taft, who himself was just then modeling from life the figure of a nude girl. The whole scene was filled with enthusiasm and energy and concentration. I felt I had suddenly stepped into Paradise.

When Mr. Taft came towards me, tall, bearded, with clear blue eyes and dark hair, and asked what I wanted, I came right out with it and said I wanted a job in his studio.

“Have you had any experience in modeling?”

I stretched the blanket somewhat and painted my experience in the Academy in Cincinnati with glowing colors, being careful not to admit that I had never modeled from life.

He waited until I had finished and then glanced towards one end of the studio where strange-looking wooden cages and iron frames were standing.

“Can you point up small models?”

I hadn’t the slightest idea what he meant; but I nodded convincingly.

“Good! Can you start in building up that group at once? I’ve got to get it along as soon as possible.”

## MODELING MY LIFE

I might as well explain right here what I was up against that morning, for with that experience my education progressed with leaps and bounds. The design for a group or statue is first made in a small sketch; from this sketch the sculptor models a very careful study in clay, usually one-fourth the size the finished work is to be; this is cast; over the plaster model is built a wooden frame, and from the top crosspieces strings are attached which fall to the floor. Beside this caged-in model is built another frame containing the iron armature—the framework on which the enlarged statue is to be built up. Then, by means of a compass, the distance from the strings to the clay model is measured, multiplied by four, and sticks reproducing this measurement are attached to the armature and extend to the point which is to be covered with clay. These sticks, with small metal points at the end, serve as guides and are left uncovered until the work is finished, thus aiding in rectifying all mistakes and miscalculations. This so-called "pointing up" need not necessarily be done by an artist; in fact the best "metteurs au point"—as the French call them—often haven't the slightest idea about modeling and are just careful mechanics. After the armature is covered with the first application of clay, thus making a working foundation, little sharp-pointed wooden pegs with heads are stuck into the plaster, these heads at exactly the distance where the surface of the finished statue will end. When all the necessary points are established, the strings and the



*Photo A. B. Bogart, New York*

**WALL FOUNTAIN**



*Photo A. B. Bogart, New York*

**BIRD FOUNTAIN**

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

wooden frame are removed, and the work of building out the statue to the points indicated is commenced.

Mr. Taft was very kind to me that morning; in fact, he was always most encouraging and interested in students working with him. As soon as I had been furnished with a sculptor's apron, he led me to that bewildering armature from which all sorts of points and indications were coming from every direction and explained very carefully what he wanted me to do. He never said that he was a little doubtful of my ability to do the work, but his detailed directions rather suggested it; and while he explained the work to me he told me what the group I was to enlarge represented. It was one of the four groups he was doing for the Horticultural Building of the World's Fair. "Now—go ahead," he ended, "and be very careful not to bury any of those sign posts in the clay."

I went ahead, and in a few minutes was hard at it getting some of that ugly armature covered with clay. Soon Mr. Taft was back, suggesting that I use butterflies, and—fortunately for me—picking up a lot of those little pieces of crossed bits of wood and fastening them here and there to the armature to help hold the clay together; otherwise I should not have known what he meant. But I was so entranced in seeing something actually coming out of all that clay and iron and wood—something that was slowly taking form—that I soon forgot all about my uncertainty over this new work. I ran up and down the ladder and piled on quantities of clay,

## MODELING MY LIFE

quite unnoticed by all the others in the studio, who were too occupied with what they were doing to bother with me.

When evening came on and the studio was to be closed, I was still racing up and down that ladder, unaware that Mr. Taft and his assistant—Charlie Mulligan by name—were standing there watching me at work.

“That’s enough for to-day,” Mr. Taft said, a pleasant note of approval in his voice. “You’re getting on famously. Only”—and he made some comments and corrections and ended by saying he would expect me the next morning.

I worked there many weeks and earned the reputation of being the most industrious and hard-working assistant in the studio. My willingness to do anything and everything was sometimes imposed upon by Mr. Mulligan, who began to call me constantly away from my regular and absorbing work—the covering of those armatures—to help him with his plaster casting, mix plaster for him, wash out molds and fetch him pails of water when he could find no one else to do it. Once, when I was at the top of a ladder and lost to the world in seeing an arm develop itself, he called out to me to fetch him a pail of water immediately. It was no moment to be commanded and without stopping work or turning my head, I called down to him: “Get your own pail of water. I’ll not be a scullion to a Mulligan.” He took the roar of laughter from the rest

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

of the studio good-naturedly; and after that we became great friends; he even went to the extent of now and then fetching *me* piles of clay unasked.

I soon became friends with the three other young women working in the studio, especially Mr. Taft's sister, Zulh Taft. The companionship of working at the same thing always develops friendship and we four students lunched together and had great fun helping each other at our various tasks.

When Mr. Taft's personal work for the Fair was finished and ready to be cast for the façade of the Horticultural Building, he was asked to take charge of the pointing up of a great number of statues and groups which had been contracted for with various sculptors and which had been sent to Chicago in models one-quarter the final size for enlargement in plaster.

In the midst of this work he called us all together one day and said he had something important to tell us. My heart sank. I felt sure that he was about to say that his own studio was to be closed and that I was again to find myself without work—losing a job that was exactly what I had been longing for.

He began very solemnly to tell us that he had just had a talk with the architect-in-chief of the Fair, Mr. Burnham, who wished him to take charge of all the sculpture enlargements for the exposition buildings. The Horticultural Building, now completed, would be turned over to him for a studio. He was authorized to engage as many people as he could find capable of doing

## MODELING MY LIFE

the work. The important thing was to get the work done within a year; nothing else mattered.

“When I told Mr. Burnham that I had several young women whom I would like to employ,” he went on, a twinkle now in his eyes, “he said that was all right, to employ any one who could do the work—white rabbits, if they would help out. So you might begin right now calling yourself white rabbits—the kind that will receive five dollars for every week day and seven-fifty on Sundays. What do you all think of it?”

What did we all think of it! I don’t know what the others thought, but when I realized that I was going to have a job that would last a whole year I left the studio with the feeling that I was either dreaming or had gone entirely out of my head.

That wonderful year! Filled with work, filled with accomplishment and filled with what was considered in those days a very fat salary! Taft’s studio was moved out en bloc to the Horticultural Building and the white rabbits moved in. We were ten by this time, including the men assistants, and we all took up residence in a small hotel near the Fair grounds. My best friend among them was always Zulh Taft—now Mrs. Hamlin Garland; then there was Bessie Potter Vonnoh, who later became one of Chicago’s best known artists on account of her very lovely portrait statuettes; Enid Yandell, who is now Kentucky’s representative sculptor; Caroline Brooks, afterwards the wife of the New York sculptor, Hermon MacNeil; and Miss Bracken, who has

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

carried off the laurels in our profession for California. We brought our lunch in paper bags and remained from eight in the morning until six in the afternoon; and when we got back to the hotel there was no question of what we would do with the evening; dinner and bed were the only things that appealed to us.

When the first month's work was finished and we took our place in line with hundreds of workmen to receive our pay envelopes, we were about the happiest white rabbits that ever existed. We rushed back to our rooms at the hotel, opened the envelopes and poured out the five-dollar bills—for some reason we were paid our hundred and fifty dollars in five-dollar bills—and carpeted the floor with them. We wanted to see what it felt like to walk on money.

It was a wholesome, happy, stimulating life. How well I remember that vast hall of iron girders and glass walls and roof! It was like some giant's studio; and surely crowded with giants, as we gradually filled it with those huge figures which, when finished, were hauled away and put into position on the buildings. In the winter we were kept from freezing by large braziers filled with glowing fires; in the summer we were saved from heat prostration by awnings that were stretched across the roof and constantly sprayed with water to make the temperature bearable. Scaffolding, iron armature, huge mounds of plaster, designs hanging from the walls and every one rushing about in mad haste; it must have been a fantastic sight! No wonder

## MODELING MY LIFE

all the architects and painters and sculptors—any one with anything to do with the Fair—came often and shared our paper bag lunch with us! We were the first art sweat shop to come into existence; and to see the white rabbits at work was one of the sights of those days.

It was tremendously thrilling to see statues and groups put into place on buildings and stand before them and know that I had spent hours working over them. My energy was inexhaustible. No scaffold was too high for me to mount, carrying a pail of plaster in one hand and tools in another. Once, when I had climbed up twenty feet or more and was covering an iron bar with plaster that was soon going to look like a Valkyrie's outstretched arm, I lost my balance, slipped and fell down between the statue and the scaffold. There was no chance to fall to the side or on my head; I was held perfectly upright by the objects on both side of me. But as I went dropping, dropping, dropping, very slowly—for now and then I stuck between the scaffold and the statue—I had heaps of time to think; and with my eyes shut, awaiting the shock which I felt was going to carry me abruptly into the next world, I was filled with regrets that my career should have been cut off at such an interesting moment. It was a terrible thing to die in the first flush of achievement. When I finally hit the ground with both feet, standing bolt upright, I shook myself very much as a cat does who has jumped from a fourth story window, looked about, smiled at

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

my friends who had come to pick up my fragments, and said: "You all look exactly as you did in that other world!"

But I didn't look the same; I was bruised from head to foot; there was not an unscratched inch on the whole of my long body; and for weeks I was unrecognizable, being a sort of study in blues and greens and blacks, though it did not occur to me to take even a day off from work after the fall. The courage and endurance of youth are truly astounding.

All through those months, out of dank marshes and a neglected wilderness, the most amazing city of lagoons and palaces was rising about us. It was all pure magic. One day I would be passing hideous iron girders and shapeless masses of sticks and mud; and seemingly the next day I would be standing spellbound before an edifice that fabulous princes were surely to inhabit. Somehow it all made me think of that twentieth chapter of Exodus: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is."

Towards the latter part of the year, I used to prolong my walk to the Horticultural Building by wandering through the grounds to see the new marvels that had sprung up. One day, passing before what was later to be the Court of Honor, I saw a number of men placing a plaster boat in the center of a large basin. The lines of the boat caught my attention. It had the grace and sweep of a gesture—the gesture of a master of line. The next day the workmen had placed four

## MODELING MY LIFE

figures of women at the sides of the boat. Their plaster draperies seemed to float in the breeze. The next day they had oars in their hands. I could feel them leaning their weight against these oars, the muscles of their arms pleasantly taut, their heads thrown back, their nostrils extended with deep breathing—and more wonderful than anything else, under their force the boat seemed to move. I was late that day in arriving at work; and after I arrived I couldn't do anything but think of those living women of plaster and that marvelous boat. A few days later a figure of "Father Time" was placed at the prow; and a woman, "Victory," blowing a resounding blast on a trumpet, stood in the center of the barge.

That morning I stood there rooted to the spot, forgetting all about the timekeeper who had twice before docked me for being late at work. I might have stood there all day if it hadn't been for a burly Irishman, one of the workmen putting the fragments of the fountain together, speaking to me.

"Sorry, miss, but you're in the way. Would you mind moving?"

"It's marvelous!" I went on talking to myself. "It can't be the work of a human being!"

The man probably thought I was mad; and I was—with enthusiasm.

"Who did it?" I went on. "Who could have done it?"

"A gent in Paris. MacMonnies is the name. Makes

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

all these parts over there and ships them here to be put together. I don't see why he couldn't just as well have done 'em here and saved us all this trouble of fitting parts together. He'd have saved himself the trouble, too, of coming over here and watching us."

"You mean to say the man who designed this is here in Chicago!"

"Sure, miss—there he is now."

I looked in the direction of his pointing finger and saw a young man leaning on a stick watching the work with absorbed interest.

"That young man!" I exclaimed. "Impossible!"

Then I sat down on a fragment of plaster to look at this wonder of wonders; but the workman had no intention of leaving me in peace. His voice now came a bit louder and more complainingly.

"Sorry, miss—but them things ain't to set on; they're to be put up on that fountain there."

I sprang up and made a step towards the creator of the fountain; I even got very near him, puzzled somewhat by his foreign appearance—or at least what appeared to me at that time foreign; then shyness swept over me and I turned away. But at that moment I knew that he was the one—and the only one—that I must study with in order to learn how to do the things I was burning to do. I must be his pupil, I must. I must. No one else in the whole world would be able to teach me sculpture. Yet—in spite of this tremendous certainty—I hadn't the courage to go to him and

## MODELING MY LIFE

tell him all this; and just on account of this bothersome timidity I lost a chance which delayed achievement.

It wasn't so many months later, however, when I was working in his studio in Paris that he introduced me to Mrs. Thomas Dewing, the wife of the painter of those lovely small portraits that were so much in vogue at that moment. I acknowledged the introduction and went back to work. When Mrs. Dewing had gone, MacMonnies asked me if I had ever seen any of her husband's work. I told him I had and admired it immensely.

"Then why under the sun didn't you tell her so?"

"Wouldn't it have been officious on my part?"

"Praise is never officious. Silence is much more so. If you like a man's work don't ever let an opportunity pass to tell him so. Even go to the extent of telling his wife, if he isn't present. The more ingenuous the praise, the more touching it is."

"Then, if I had spoken to you that day in Chicago, you wouldn't have minded?"

"I'd have been tickled to death."

I have always remembered that advice, especially when I have tasted the bitter discouragement of having people come to my studio, look blankly at the work I was doing and say nothing. Many people fear to express themselves because they do not know the right technical terms. I don't want technical words—I want just simple everyday expressions that come from the

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

heart. They mean everything in the world to me. I am not working for the appreciation of the few; I should like to appeal to the world. Some one has said that even criticism is better than silence. I don't agree to this. Criticism can be very harmful unless it comes from a master; and in spite of the fact that we have hundreds of critics these days, it is one of the most difficult of professions. To be able to criticize intelligently, one must have knowledge of the technic of the art he is criticizing, he must have a sensitiveness that helps him to see what the artist is driving at, and he has got to have very broad sympathies. His work is constructive, not destructive—as the amateur critic seems to think. Only lately I have had some very irritating criticism, due to a little draped figure of Diana I am now doing. I intend it to be placed in a garden, against a background of dense foliage; and I particularly want it to look well in the moonlight. My whole conception of the work is for just such a moment. To get the effects needed I have had to exaggerate certain features; and it is there that the inexperienced critics burst forth. "But—the neck is too long! No one ever had a neck like that!" My friends evidently think my years of study have been wasted and that I have learned nothing about the normal length of a neck. Of course it is out of proportion, otherwise I would never get the silhouette I am struggling so hard to achieve. As a matter of fact, no measurement in the whole figure is correct according to nature. It is not a portrait statue,

## MODELING MY LIFE

my little Diana, it is an architectural ornament for a garden.

Long ago I found out that it was necessary to break away from the honest following of nature; I had the sad lesson to learn that nature is seldom to be copied faithfully if effective work is to be accomplished. My most valuable experience in this direction came about through an order I had for a statue to be put up in Woodlawn Cemetery. My model was extremely beautiful; I made a careful record in the statue of her appearance, her personality, her proportions; the whole work was done according to measurements. In my studio the statue appeared to be an exceedingly successful piece of work; I was particularly happy over the result of my labor; but after the statue had been put into marble, shipped to America, and I followed to see to placing it on a pedestal in the cemetery lot, the head seemed to have grown during the voyage to twice its size and all the other features had changed accordingly. Somehow the out-of-doors atmosphere had destroyed all the proportions the studio had created. Whistler said that "no man alive is life size," and for that reason always painted his portraits a little under life size. To understand what I am driving at, try a little experiment. When you are looking at your friend across a garden, put up your finger and measure off her size. You will be surprised to find that she is not even the length of your finger. Such an observation will help you to understand that it is impossible for a

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

sculptor, no matter how conscientious he may be, to make his statues according to actual measurements.

When the state buildings at the World's Fair began to be put up, Mr. Taft told me that he had been asked if any of his pupils could do the statues for these buildings; and added that he was inclined to risk a figure for the Illinois building to me.

"The only trouble is that they want an Illinois woman to do it."

"I am an Illinois woman," I answered, with very solemn face and meeting his eyes squarely.

"I thought you were from Indiana."

"They will never know unless you tell them. I'm perfectly willing to come from Illinois to do that statue."

He agreed to keep my secret; and a few days later I was given a studio all to myself and began work on a statue with the impressive title of "Justice." I went to work on that "statue" with a singing heart and delighted to get back to working in clay. For a whole year I had been struggling with plaster—always a vastly unsympathetic medium to me with which to work.

It never rains but it pours. I had no sooner started on the statue for the Illinois State Building than I had a letter from Terre Haute, written by a public-spirited woman, Miss Susan Ball, who had raised a thousand dollars for a statue for the Indiana Building and who asked me to do it. This meant swerving back to my native state and coming from Indiana again; which I did the moment I had got through the work for Illinois. It

## MODELING MY LIFE

sounds as if I wore a coat of many colors; but those were days in which I had to do many things to get ahead—and the more work I had to do the merrier I was.

Those two statues! I tremble now when I think what they must have been like. The Indiana one, called "Nymph of the Wabash," was packed up after the Fair closed and sent to Terre Haute and placed in the Public Library, where I am told it still stands, now principally coats of paint which have been given it each year to renew its youth. I have never had the courage to go and see it. Nothing in the world would make me. And I only regret it didn't have the same fate as "Justice," which was destroyed by fire.

MacMonnies once told me that it was an excellent thing for a sculptor to have some piece of his work destroyed by fire, flood or earthquake—anything that would get it definitely out of the way; for afterwards, in speaking of his work, he could say: "Yes—this is pretty good; but you should have seen that thing I did for So-and-so. That was really my masterpiece. But, alas! it was burned in the great fire," etc., etc. Thinking of this suggestion, I have often been tempted to refer to my "Justice" which ornamented the Illinois State Building at the World's Fair of Chicago in 1893 and speak of it tenderly as the one really epoch-making piece of work I have ever done. Only the fear that some one may have seen the statue and remembered it has kept me from indulging in such a reminiscence.

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

Those two statues brought on my first interview—which I interpreted as meaning that I had finally arrived. To be called on by a bona fide reporter who told me that he had been sent by his paper to write something about me and my work was a rung of the ladder I thought was years off. The interview was not successful. The reporter confessed at the outset that he knew nothing about art, that the week before he had been the reporter for the sporting page, but that if I would write what I wanted said he would see that it was published. I had so much trouble deciding what I wanted said, writing it, changing it, tearing it up and beginning all over again, that the reporter finally rose and said, "I ain't got any more time to waste on you," and left in disgust without anything.

This incident makes me realize what wonderful strides newspapers have made during the last thirty years. The reporters and journalists who come to interview me now are invariably intelligent, well educated, charming people who are quite familiar with sculpture; some of them often put me to the blush with their information; and they always ask questions that are suggestive and make one talk well—as intelligent questions do. I don't suppose there is a paper in the United States to-day that would think of sending the sporting editor to interview an artist.

When our work was finished and the Fair finally opened, I stopped on in the little hotel near the gate where I had lived that whole year, feeling, as I had

## MODELING MY LIFE

sounds as if I wore a coat of many colors; but those were days in which I had to do many things to get ahead—and the more work I had to do the merrier I was.

Those two statues! I tremble now when I think what they must have been like. The Indiana one, called "Nymph of the Wabash," was packed up after the Fair closed and sent to Terre Haute and placed in the Public Library, where I am told it still stands, now principally coats of paint which have been given it each year to renew its youth. I have never had the courage to go and see it. Nothing in the world would make me. And I only regret it didn't have the same fate as "Justice," which was destroyed by fire.

MacMonnies once told me that it was an excellent thing for a sculptor to have some piece of his work destroyed by fire, flood or earthquake—anything that would get it definitely out of the way; for afterwards, in speaking of his work, he could say: "Yes—this is pretty good; but you should have seen that thing I did for So-and-so. That was really my masterpiece. But, alas! it was burned in the great fire," etc., etc. Thinking of this suggestion, I have often been tempted to refer to my "Justice" which ornamented the Illinois State Building at the World's Fair of Chicago in 1893 and speak of it tenderly as the one really epoch-making piece of work I have ever done. Only the fear that some one may have seen the statue and remembered it has kept me from indulging in such a reminiscence.

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

Those two statues brought on my first interview—which I interpreted as meaning that I had finally arrived. To be called on by a bona fide reporter who told me that he had been sent by his paper to write something about me and my work was a rung of the ladder I thought was years off. The interview was not successful. The reporter confessed at the outset that he knew nothing about art, that the week before he had been the reporter for the sporting page, but that if I would write what I wanted said he would see that it was published. I had so much trouble deciding what I wanted said, writing it, changing it, tearing it up and beginning all over again, that the reporter finally rose and said, "I ain't got any more time to waste on you," and left in disgust without anything.

This incident makes me realize what wonderful strides newspapers have made during the last thirty years. The reporters and journalists who come to interview me now are invariably intelligent, well educated, charming people who are quite familiar with sculpture; some of them often put me to the blush with their information; and they always ask questions that are suggestive and make one talk well—as intelligent questions do. I don't suppose there is a paper in the United States to-day that would think of sending the sporting editor to interview an artist.

When our work was finished and the Fair finally opened, I stopped on in the little hotel near the gate where I had lived that whole year, feeling, as I had

## MODELING MY LIFE

worked so hard over that Fair, that I could now afford to play with it awhile; and Zulh Taft and I did play with it; for weeks and weeks we spent each day there, passing most of the time at the art exhibits, but never forgetting the thousand and one things that were tremendously interesting in other directions—especially the Midway Plaisance, which we usually haunted in the evenings after dinner. Those weeks at the Fair were a part of my real education—and one of the most satisfactory ones any student could possibly have had. The best the world could do in every line was there to gaze at, study, understand and interpret. When the World's Fair closed and I could no longer spend the days there, I turned away reluctantly—a vastly different young woman from the one who had left Terre Haute two years before. The wonderful, entralling, suggestive art of the world had been spread before me; and I had thirstily drunk it in. And as for having had ambition before—that was like groping in the dark; my ambition now was reaching out into light that was fairly blinding.

I came home late one evening, that autumn after the Fair had closed, and threw myself across the bed. Zulh Taft came into my room, glanced at me curiously and asked what was the matter.

I looked at her with what she afterwards said was the expression of a saint seeing some beatific vision.

"It's all settled," I told her. "I've just bought my ticket and paid for it. I haven't got but three hundred

## CHICAGO VIA CINCINNATI

and fifty dollars left—but that's enough. It will keep me going for a while."

Zulh grasped my hands, patted them and tried to soothe me. She thought I was in the grip of high fever. "Don't talk any more just now, dear. You'll feel better in the morning."

"But I want to talk about it. I haven't got much time left. I'm leaving the end of this week."

"Where do you think you are going?"

"To Paris—to study with that man who designed the fountain."

"But you don't know him! He may not take you as a pupil!"

"I will meet him—and he will take me as a pupil! He's not going to be able to help himself!"

Zulh released my hands and went over to the window and stood there a long time silent.

"All right," she said finally. "If you're going to Paris next week I'm going with you."

### III

#### PARIS AND MACMONNIES

PROVIDENCE must have had to work overtime to take care of Zulh Taft and me on that trip to Paris. We were much less experienced than those famous babes in the woods; even getting from Chicago to New York was something of an undertaking for us; and when we got on a boat that was to take us three thousand miles across the ocean and land us in a country, the language of which neither of us knew a word, the undertaking suddenly became a very serious adventure. Seasickness, cold weather, no proper clothing for a winter voyage, no steamer rugs, and worse than anything else, no friends—all this very soon made us feel exactly like two kittens locked out of the house at night. Providence, though, working all the time, placed us at the table with H. Siddons Mowbray, the mural painter, and his wife, who, probably touched by our obvious need of help and advice, took us under their wings. They brought us fruit when we couldn't—or our stomachs wouldn't—take any other food; they loaned us steamer rugs of which they seemed to have a quantity; and when we got off at Cherbourg and stared about us in hopeless bewilderment, they changed their plans for stopping off at Amiens, and went all the way to Paris with us just to see that we

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

didn't get lost by the way. Incidents like this—which have happened to me all along my rocky path—have made me feel that the world is a very wonderful place to live in. Whenever I hear some one saying life is unfair, people cruel, and everything generally wrong, I begin to wonder what is the matter with that person; the fault must be his; it is surely not the world's.

That first night and the next day in Paris convinced me that all the trouble of getting there was as nothing compared to the pleasure of walking along those tree-lined boulevards. From the moment we got off the boat—one of the most painful and mortifying experiences I have ever been through, due to our not having enough actual money to tip those seemingly hundred stewards standing in line—I had been surprised to find France just like any other part of the world I had been in; I mean there were trees and houses and rivers and grass and ground—just as there were at home. What exactly I had expected I don't know; but it surely should have been something fantastic and strange—and it wasn't; it was quite normal but exceedingly lovely.

And Paris! I knew that first night that I loved it; and I have gone on loving it ever since. A whole year spent away from it is a great loss to me; and yet I like to leave it now and then so as to have the pleasure of going back. The hotel near the station where we spent the night, the unfamiliar twin beds, breakfast in our room the next morning—an unheard-of thing for us—and delicious coffee and rolls and unsalted butter are all parts of

## MODELING MY LIFE

a lasting impression. All that morning, still with our good angels, going to the Crédit Lyonnais to cash one of our small checks, driving through the city in a fiacre with a coachman attired in blue clothes, a red waist-coat and stiff white hat, crossing one of those lovely bridges that span the Seine and finally being left at the Girls' Club—inaugurated and supported by Mrs. White-law Reid—where we expected to find rooms and didn't, as they were already full up, and our eventual shelter in the Hôtel de la Haute Loire, now Hôtel Raspail, on the corner of the boulevards Raspail and Montparnasse—all these experiences kept us sailing way up in the air without any thought of getting our feet firmly planted on the ground.

But that came only too soon—as it always does. When we found ourselves alone in a little room and had got over the excitement of discovering that the floor was tiled and the windows opened in and out instead of up and down, we immediately considered the price we were paying, counted our money and realized that life in any hotel was far beyond us. We both agreed that we had better start out at once to find cheaper lodgings; and very soon we were on our way along the boulevards looking anxiously for signs "à louer," which some one had told us meant to let. Sandwiched in with this discouraging task was some rather hectic sight-seeing; only a night and day in Paris had convinced us that we could not possibly hope to remain there very long and we felt we had better see all the monuments as quickly as possi-

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

ble. Our slim savings seemed to vanish with magic rapidity. But no discouragement can be very real to a young woman who has decided to devote her life to sculpture and is seeing for the first time such marvels as the Winged Victory, the Venus de Milo, and the extraordinary modern collection in the Musée du Luxembourg. Under the spell of standing before these marvels—marvels that somehow dwarfed my impressions of the World's Fair—I almost forgot the inspiration that had brought me to Paris.

But finally, armed with a letter of introduction given me in Chicago by a friend of Mrs. MacMonnies, I called on my future master's wife, hoping for her influence and assistance in penetrating into the Impasse du Maine studios where the sculptor worked. I found out afterwards that many people called at the apartment on the Rue de Sèvres with the same idea and that Mrs. MacMonnies usually proved herself a very good watchdog in the interest of her husband and his precious time. She invariably made the same reply to requests to visit the studios: "There is nothing of great interest going on there just now—a statue is being cast or something equally boring—but perhaps later on—" The "later on" never came—for visitors were not invited to the studios.

Mrs. MacMonnies was a lovely person and a very charming hostess; her dark Spanish beauty fitted in perfectly with the setting of tapestry-hung walls and rare old furniture; and I enjoyed my visit to her immensely. I went away definitely decided to have some day an

## MODELING MY LIFE

apartment exactly like hers. But in order to do this, I must first become a successful sculptor, and to become a successful sculptor it was absolutely necessary to study with MacMonnies. On the way back to the hotel, I planned all this out in detail until I suddenly realized that in relinquishing that letter of introduction—I had given it to the footman at the door—I had lost my one means of getting into communication with MacMonnies. What on earth was I to do now!

From that moment sight-seeing lost all its charms; and of course, to add to my depression, those constantly diminishing funds seemed an ever-present sword of Damocles ready to cut our trip short at any moment. We tramped and tramped up and down the streets of the Latin Quarter and found nothing that we considered cheap enough. One day, in utter despair, Zulh and I sank down on a bench on the Boulevard Raspail; she burst into tears; I sat with fixed eyes and tightly closed lips. The end of our adventure was in sight and I had never even so much as caught a glimpse of MacMonnies. I often go and sit on that bench now—it is just where the Rue Boissonade enters the Boulevard Raspail—and reconstruct that scene.

While we both sat there, the epitome of tragedy, two athletic young art students walked by, looked at us, stopped, and then came up to us. They were friends we had made in Chicago—Bryson Burroughs and his wife. They hardly waited to greet us before they asked what was the matter. We told them, Zulh still weeping, and

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

I, no doubt, still with the set expression of blasted hopes. Instead of laughing at us and making light of our troubles, they immediately began planning for us, said they were going off on a three weeks' walking trip through Brittany and would let us have their studio at just what they were paying for it—which, thank Heaven, came within our means. The sun came out with a burst of glory; though, at least for me, there were some ominous clouds still hanging about.

I told them I had not been able to see MacMonnies.

“Why don’t you go to his studio?”

“I don’t even know where it is.”

They gave me his address and I wrote it down hastily on a scrap of paper.

The next day we installed ourselves in the Burroughses' sky-lighted studio, which served all purposes —living, sleeping, eating, cooking and workshop; and late that afternoon, attired in the only clothes I had, a brown tailored suit, brown and tan checked golf cape and a Fedora hat—an outfit which had appeared appropriate for Chicago but was not exactly decorative in Paris—I walked slowly along the Boulevard Edgar Quinet on my way to MacMonnies' studio. I don’t believe I have ever done such concentrated thinking as I did then, all centering about what I should say to him once I had actually got through the door into his studio. I was still composing and rejecting phrases when Number 16 Impasse du Maine was there before me. A very cross concierge pointed out the entrance to the studios—at this

## MODELING MY LIFE

time MacMonnies had several in a row—which was in a delightful little courtyard filled with green plants and fragments of sculpture; and I made my way straight up to the fatal door.

The door was closed, but as I stopped before it the most alarming sounds reached me, coming from within. Of course I was in a somewhat nervous condition, but I couldn't believe my imagination was creating those sounds; they somehow suggested what a medieval combat must have been like; there were shuffling of feet, clashing of swords and shouts and yells in a language utterly unknown to me. I waited interminably for the noise to subside, and when finally a slight lull came, I knocked gently on the door. No answer. I knocked again, more firmly. This time the door was opened a few inches and a strange-looking apparition peered out at me—a very tall man dressed in white flannels carrying a sword in one hand and wearing some sort of a wire mask over his face.

“And what do you want?” the voice from behind the mask demanded, frankly impatient.

I saw that the door was likely to be shut at any moment; I also knew that my whole career depended on the answer to that question; and, driven into drastic action by a combination of timidity and consternation, I gathered my forces and said in a loud, determined voice:

“I have come all the way from Chicago to talk to Mr. MacMonnies, and I must see him at once.”

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

“Oh-h-h!” said the voice behind the mask. “Then—come in.”

The tall white figure opened the door wider, ushered me in and showed me across a large studio to a small room which I took to be a sort of office, as it was furnished with desk and chairs. Here I was asked to sit down and wait a few minutes. This I did with considerable satisfaction. I was in the sacred precincts at last; and I had evidently impressed that white-clothed, masked figure, with the importance of my mission.

In a few minutes he was back again, still in the fencing suit but without the mask, and showing a very attractive, pleasant face, rather thin and long with a humorous twist to mouth and nose, gray-blue eyes, yellow hair and mustache, and a funny little tuft of hair growing straight out from the chin—all features that had impressed me when I saw him standing before his own work at the World’s Fair.

He lighted a cigarette, sat down comfortably and crossed his legs.

“Well—fire away! What’s it all about?”

I tried to keep my voice steady. “I saw your fountain in the Court of Honor at the World’s Fair. It was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen. As soon as I found out you had done it I began planning and saving to come over here and ask you to let me study with you. Well—here I am.”

“I don’t take pupils.”

“But—please—can’t I do something here? I’m will-

## MODELING MY LIFE

ing to work at anything. I'm not inexperienced. I worked a whole year with Mr. Taft on the World's Fair statues. I'm sure I could do something useful about the studio. I'll promise not to be in the way if—if you'll only let me come for a little while. I haven't money enough to stay long."

He went on smoking, inhaling deeply and sitting there as if he had not heard a word I said while I watched him eagerly to see what his decision was going to be.

"Done much drawing?" he suddenly asked me.

I told him of my work in the Academy at Cincinnati, all about my drawings from geometrical solids and detached features and the mammoth anatomical figure.

"Never drawn from life?"

"No."

"You must begin that at once. You must draw, draw, draw—all the time—all day—all night—until you know you can draw to the very best of your ability. You can never be a sculptor until you know how to draw."

He stopped to light another cigarette and while doing so glanced up at some drawings from the nude that were hanging on the walls of the small room. I followed his glance and for a few moments forgot all about my own problem in admiration of the drawings. They were entirely different from any Academy drawings I had seen before. The shadows particularly caught my attention—beautiful, rich, luminous shadows following exquisite, vibrating lines.

"If I could only begin copying those," I said, sud-

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

denly quite unselfconscious. "I mean—before I begin drawing from life."

"Those! Yes—they are mine. Well—suppose you do!"

I didn't immediately catch his meaning. "Do what?"

"Begin copying those. Put your mornings in on that; and in the afternoons you can work in the big studio modeling."

When it finally rushed over me that this was his way of telling me that he had decided to let me work in his studio, I rose quickly and hurried towards the door, my one idea being to get away before he had reconsidered the matter—for I instinctively felt that his permission had not been granted with enthusiasm.

My hand was on the latch of the door when his voice stopped me.

"Hold on there! Where are you going?"

I stopped, unsteady with the fear that he had already changed his mind and was now going to tell me it was impossible.

"What's the matter?"

"I! Nothing," I managed to articulate feebly.

"Aren't you coming here to work?"

I nodded, swallowed hard and put out my hand. "Thank you. I'll be here to-morrow morning at nine o'clock."

He looked at me in a way that told me unmistakably that he was thinking "queer duck" and opened the door for me.

## MODELING MY LIFE

“All right. To-morrow. Au revoir.”

That first encounter with MacMonnies was somewhat characteristic of my subsequent relations with him. He was inclined to treat his own work and those working with him casually; I mean to say he never grew solemn and soulful, nor did he indulge in what might be called artistic temperament. He was a hard worker, knew perfectly well what he was about and did it; and he expected those working with him to do the same. At the time I met him he was about thirty and had got safely by those days of struggle and discouragement that everybody must pass through to achieve something. He had begun to study sculpture with Saint-Gaudens in America, and being very poor at the time, he had slept on a shelf in that sculptor's studio in lieu of anywhere else to go. When he arrived in Paris he went straight to Falguière and studied with him before entering the École des Beaux Arts; and almost immediately he began to be noticed. His first year in Paris he carried off the prize of the atelier, even over the heads of many who had been there several years. Lack of funds soon drove him back to America, but he returned to Paris within a year. From then on his success had come very fast. His “Diana” brought him praise and honor at the Paris Salon; his “Pan” became known internationally; his statue of Stranahan, a most lovely portrait statue, placed in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, was one of the first sculpture figures of our day to wear modern clothes, even to an overcoat over one arm and a silk hat in the hand,

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

a triumph of art over matter. But there is no need of citing the work that has made MacMonnies famous; any one interested in the development of art in America is familiar with his important contributions to it. During my studio days with him, he created an impression that has never faded—that of a delightful and stimulating man to work with. What he thought of me during that period, I do not know. He never told me. Sometimes I felt he considered me rather a bore, forcing my way in there; but after he had let me enter his studio he evidently decided not to bother any more about the situation. If I didn't like it and didn't get on with the others, it would be my fault; if I made good, all well and so much the better for me. I am inclined to think that his own struggle to get ahead had made him—not exactly unsympathetic—but a bit matter-of-fact about the struggles of others. Perhaps he felt very much as I do now; that if the student is talented he will get along—no matter what happens. But once he saw that I adored sculpture—as much as he himself did—he gave me the most enormous amount of time and attention. He was never too busy or preoccupied to stop and give me a criticism—not an oral criticism, which is of no earthly good to a student of sculpture, but a practical demonstration of how to design and model.

You can imagine that I went away with a whole cageful of birds singing in my heart that day; and they kept on singing all through the night and into the next morning. At last I had what my heart had

## MODELING MY LIFE

so long been set on; I was MacMonnies' pupil, though not yet acknowledged, I found out the next morning when I arrived at the studio much earlier than the master and was admitted with frank suspicion by his two assistants—both Frenchmen—who evidently hadn't been told to expect me and to whom I could explain nothing as they did not speak English and my French was still confined to "bon jour," which doesn't take you very far in presenting your case. However, they were quite polite and gracious—as I have always found Frenchmen to be—though when they saw me go to the small office I had been shown to the day before, take down one of the drawings and place it on an easel, they appeared slightly thunderstruck. They watched me closely while I unrolled my drawing paper, thumb-tacked it on a drawing board which I had brought with me, and then looked about for a stool. One was quick to see what I wanted and very kindly brought me a stool; and the other began to forage in his lunch basket for a piece of bread which he presented to me to use as an eraser; then, convinced that I was not there to plunder—as they might well have expected at first—they left me alone to go on my happy way.

My lessons in drawing with the master began that morning and went on for weeks. Later he advised me to go to a life class and draw from life, which I did at Collarossi's Academy. Then, finding the weekly criticisms of visiting masters inadequate and not very instructive—they consisted merely of "pas mal—pas mal du tout"

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

(not bad—not bad at all)—or “the feet are too small” or “too big”—“the figure is out of plumb”—I finally got together some fellow students—by this time my acquaintance in the Quarter was widening—we took a small studio, employed a model and MacMonnies consented to come to us now and then to criticize our drawings.

But to go back to that first day. When I returned after lunch to put in the afternoon on sculpture, I was again ahead of the master; the two assistants were there and a new addition—the most dashing woman I had seen since my arrival in Paris, which is saying a good deal. She was standing in the middle of the big studio, one hand on her hip, the other holding a cigarette which she inhaled now and then, blowing the smoke vehemently through her nostrils. She stared at me as I entered, watched me go to the office and put on my sculptor’s apron, and continued to stare at me when I returned to the studio. Her glance was nothing less than annihilating. When she looked towards the assistants and said what I felt sure was “What’s that?” and they told her that I was MacMonnies’ pupil her manner became even more disconcerting; she ended by coming up close to me, looking squarely into my eyes and making a face that was far from reassuring. I hadn’t the slightest idea who she was or what she was doing there; nor had I the least suspicion of what I was in for. After she had made the face at me, she lighted another cigarette and began taking off her clothes, casually talking to the men all the

## MODELING MY LIFE

time and leaving her garments wherever she happened to be. When she finally got rid of everything except stockings and slippers she came over and lay down on the floor in front of me and began a perfect avalanche of French. Of course I didn't understand a word and was beginning to feel extremely uncomfortable. I had heard something of the high jinks that went on in studios, but all the stories had been rather vague and indefinite. However, I determined to stick out anything that might happen—at least until MacMonnies arrived—and did my best to be polite to what I considered a wholly mad, naked woman. While she sat there hurling words at me, a man came in, went behind a screen, undressed, came out and sat down on the model throne; then MacMonnies arrived and the two models took the pose for the Venus and Adonis group on which he was then working.

Before beginning to model from the life group, MacMonnies looked about for some work for me to begin on. "What do you want to do?" he asked me, as if undecided. "Anything you tell me," I replied.

He went towards a small figure of a cupid mounted on a tripod pedestal. "Ever done moldings?"

"Miles of them—at Chicago."

"Then you might begin on the moldings of this tripod. Later on you can work on the sphinxes that decorate the corners."

He gave me some swift, concise directions, told me to sit on the floor where I could work more comfortably, and then went to work himself. Incidentally, I sat on that



SEAWEED FOUNTAIN

Fountain on the estate of Mrs. Arthur Scott Burden, Long Island.  
Photo taken in Architectural League exhibit.

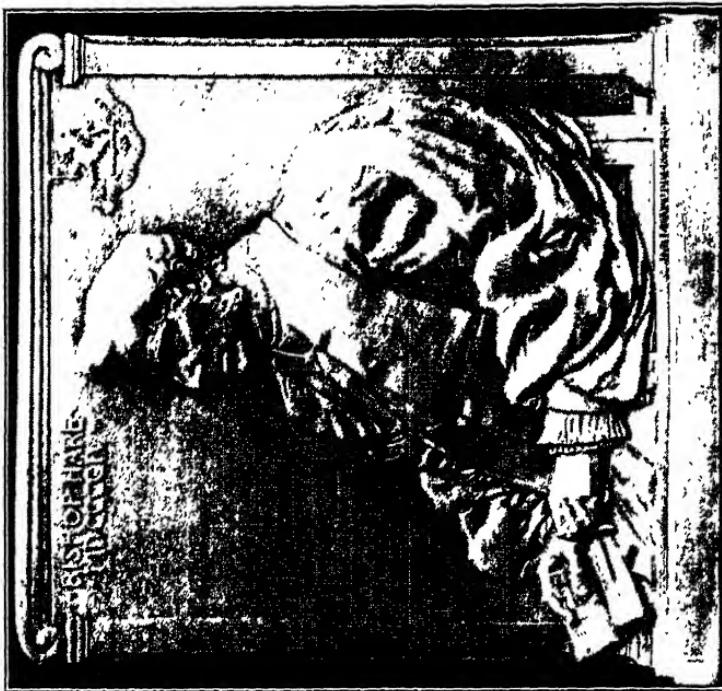


MACMONNIES CRITICIZING THE WORK OF AMERICAN

Photos A. B. Bogart, New York

PORTRAIT MEDALLIONS

In Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

floor every afternoon for several weeks, doing my best to make those moldings exactly as he wanted them.

When he had turned away and begun on the Venus and Adonis group there were three hours of peace—at least for me; but as soon as MacMonnies had left the studio and that woman was released, she once more began her attack on me. By this time I had come to the conclusion that she resented any women students being in the studio and had made up her mind, as soon as she found me installed there, to shock me into leaving. She jumped off the model throne, sprang from chair to chair, raced about wildly, and finally, pretending to be overcome with the heat, made Adonis spray her with water from the syringe used to keep the clay moist. She did everything she could think of, but seeing that I went on steadily with my work apparently unconscious of her, she rushed up to me and once more began a long dissertation in French.

It was a battle royal between us for several days. She was as determined as I and, with the help of Adonis—not unwilling by any means to see what fun could be got out of me—she came pretty near winning out. No doubt I was a sort of kill-joy to their gaiety; no woman, especially a young, green, American one, had ever been permitted to work there. I was very much put to it to know exactly how to combat them; but I went on maintaining what I thought was the only attitude—one of indifference; sometimes I went further and pretended to be an innocent simpleton that was amused at their per-

## MODELING MY LIFE

formances, though praying all the time that they would not go too far and do something that would make it impossible for me to remain. Ignorance of French served me well during those first days; in fact, I found it so useful that even months afterwards, when I began to understand what was being said, I pretended not to know a single word of French. It is much more difficult to get a rise out of a person who doesn't understand off-color jokes and references and who receives everything said and done with a perfectly silly smile.

Lily White! That was her name; though where she acquired it no one ever seemed to know; and her pronunciation of it—so entirely French that you never would have recognized it as being of Anglo-Saxon origin—surely suggested nothing but wholly Latin ancestry. At any rate, she was the most outrageous, daring, conscienceless person I have ever encountered. They say she is now a most respectable wife of an important provincial official and the mother of a large family—which is very hard for me to believe; when I knew her she was a mad, gay creature, only serious when she was on the model stand, where she always respected herself and her profession.

One day, taking advantage of MacMonnies' absence, she made Adonis dance about the studio with her in a whirling sort of cancan—now and then stopping to make low curtseys before me. Getting tired of my foolish smiles and continuous "joli-joli" of simulated approval, she sprawled down before me and repeated

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

over and over the same words, bent upon my understanding her. Failing in this, she called some one from the adjoining studio to interpret.

“She says she understands you are now drawing in a class which she calls the Atelier des Anges.”

“What does she mean by that?” I asked.

“The studio of angels—where the young American women are drawing. She wants to pose for the class. Will you arrange it for her?”

By this time I had found out that she was considered the most beautiful and satisfactory model in the whole of the Latin Quarter, and was by far the best paid; and quite rightly, too, for she was a really very lovely creature, very fair, with wonderfully radiant red hair and a perfectly rounded figure. Other artists had tried to get her away from MacMonnies' studio and had failed. That she should have wanted to pose for our simple little life class meant that she was up to some new devilment. However, I said we would be enchanted and greatly flattered; and the scene ended with an appointment being made for the next week.

When I broke the news to the class they were all very much excited over having the famous Lily White pose for them, not once guessing that she had been put up to it by the Impasse so as to get a good story out of the shocks inflicted on us. I was determined not to let her get the best of us. I told the girls of my experience with her, what I knew about her, and prepared them for the worst; I even went further and counseled

## MODELING MY LIFE

those I thought might not be able to stand her antics not to come that day—though they did, every one of them; and then I arranged with the students who could speak French to go into raptures over everything she might do and tell her she was entrancing and marvelous. The scene was pretty well set and arranged before Lily arrived.

She came in more chic than ever—she was always the last word in whatever the Rue de la Paix had pronounced smart—and looked us over with amusement in her eyes. We received her most formally, I taking the rôle of old and intimate friend and presenting each student to her and calling her with great respect Madame White. We gave her the seat of honor, brought her tea and cakes, and sat about her in worshiping attitudes that might have intimidated a less daring person. After tea she asked if we were ready for her to pose. There was an immediate chorus of “Oui, oui, oui!” and we all hurried to our places, while Lily, taking no notice of the screen behind which all the models undressed, began taking off her very few garments, finally standing before us in the Venus de' Medici pose as though she were overcome with shame and modesty. Then she asked what position we wanted her to take, and when we told her anything she might choose, she sprang up on the model throne and sat astride a chair with her back to us. There was a suppressed chuckle from one of the girls. I frowned at her quickly and nodded to one who spoke French. She was quick to catch my signal and, clasping

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

her hands in ecstasy, exclaimed: "What a superb pose! Grace itself!" And we all hurriedly grouped ourselves about her and began sketching.

At this Lily threw herself on her back and twisted both legs about the chair. Again the girl who spoke French exclaimed: "Ravishing! What wonderful lines! Please keep that pose just a few moments." Lily shot her a contemptuous but slightly puzzled glance, and immediately stood on her head. At this we all applauded and went hard to work as fast as we could.

I was watching Lily all the time, and when our eyes met I nodded enthusiastically—to which she did not reply. Finding standing on her head somewhat more than she had counted on, she spread herself flat on the floor and began squirming about as if in agony. I rushed for a glass of water and insisted that she drink it; instead she tossed it over her naked body, shook herself violently, threw on her clothes and hurried away without a word. We had won and she knew it; and after that the "Studio of the Angels" went up very much in the respect of the Impasse.

The next afternoon I got hold of the same interpreter and asked him to express our thanks to Lily for posing for us, to request her to come again as soon as she found it convenient, and offered her the money for the sitting. She listened to what was said, raised her shoulders with a shrug, and refused to accept the money. From that day I was never again troubled with the fear of having to leave the studio on account of Lily; though I must

## MODELING MY LIFE

confess this was somewhat helped along by Lily's arrest a few days later. Her love of adventure had led her a little too far. She had appeared at the Quatz Arts Ball as an Ethiopian princess—in her favorite costume of no clothes at all—borne in a litter on the shoulders of twenty slaves. Not content with her tremendous success at the ball, she had insisted, when forced to leave at eight o'clock the next morning, in parading the whole length of the Boulevard St. Michel—still in her first birthday dress—for which she was arrested, imprisoned and finally had to be paid out by the studios, which couldn't get along without her. She was too valuable a model to be left to waste away in prison and lose her figure—though she undoubtedly deserved the chastisement.

In spite of all my strict attention to work and a seriousness which left no room for outside interests, stories of those marvelous Quatz Arts balls reached me little by little. As my knowledge of French progressed, I found myself listening and becoming more and more interested in them. They were the absorbing topic of conversation for many months each year and were considered, not only the last word in everything outrageous, but seriously important on account of the artists who took part in them and the gorgeous grouping and colors. Originated and controlled by the Beaux Arts students and run with a secrecy that added to their fascination, it was the great desire of every student to obtain one of the extremely restricted tickets. The more I heard

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

of these balls the more I became fired with the idea that my artistic education would be incomplete without attending one; but beyond obtaining a ticket was the even greater question of getting together a costume that would be considered worthy of the occasion. Every one who presented himself for admittance had to pass an examination by a committee of judges; and it was said that more were refused entrance than were passed through the gates.

Of course I didn't try to go that first year; I wouldn't have even thought of it then if it had been possible; but a long time afterwards, when timidity and prudery had been somewhat overcome, I decided that the time had come for me to see one of those balls. Loie Fuller and I agreed that we would go together, and knowing a painter who was on the committee for costumes, we sought him out in his studio and asked him to help us.

He looked at us, after we had stated our mission, and smiled whimsically. "I don't think either of you ladies really want to go to that ball."

"We do," Loie Fuller answered firmly. "And you must help us get there."

"Do you know what you must wear?"

"We've heard the costumes are superb and are quite willing to go to any expense."

"Superb!" he repeated, still smiling. "Yes—many of them are. But—that is not what I meant." He turned and pointed to a small pile of tulle lying on a table. "Do you see that stuff? There are probably three or

## MODELING MY LIFE

four meters of it. Can you imagine how many costumes that is going to make?"

We gasped. "How many?" There wasn't nearly enough for one.

"That is to make costumes for forty women."

We went away discouraged—at least Loie Fuller was; I was concentrating on how I could get by this seeming impossibility. I went home and spent a whole night designing something that would clothe me sufficiently, and yet be startling enough to satisfy the judges. The ball that year was to illustrate Scandinavian Sagas. I looked up the wearing apparel of heroes and heroines of that remote age and finally found a picture of a viking that appealed to me immensely—the appeal no doubt due in some measure to one of those Longfellow illustrations that I had copied so many years before. Yes—I would go as a viking—a sort of mythical viking!

I got every one I knew to help me and really achieved something that I thought was tremendously effective—and which still clothed me sufficiently to have been worn in *Terre Haute* without shocking any one. It took me hours to dress, that night of the ball, and at last, when the group with which I was going came for me, they all approved of my costume. We went on foot, as was the habit of *Quatz Arts* Ball groups, and arrived at the entrance in high spirits. We were shown into a small antechamber and found ourselves before a row of judges. They looked us over, examined our costumes, expressed great admiration and praise, retired to confer in whis-

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

pers and then returned and informed us that we had been found entirely satisfactory and could pass at once into the ballroom. At a gesture from the judges, one of the two entrance doors was thrown open and we were told to enter. Beyond the door, carefully barring any vision of what was beyond, hung a heavy red curtain. We passed the door, preening ourselves for a spectacular entrance, heard the door slam back of it, brushed aside the red curtain and found ourselves in a dark, dank alley.

I didn't know what had happened until one of my companions explained that this was a trick the judges always employed when they found your costume unworthy of the ball—they never told you so; they merely had you shown to a door that put you out in the street.

When I got home that night, footsore and weary, Zulh Taft rubbed her eyes and asked what had happened; she hadn't expected me back until morning.

"Nothing happened," I grumbled, "except that I had too many clothes on."

After Lily White found out that she couldn't scare me away from the studio, I worked along much more peacefully; and when the moldings of that pedestal were finished, MacMonnies told me to work on the figure of the cupid which was only roughly indicated. A little Italian boy came every afternoon to pose and I worked directly from the model, in spite of the fact that I had never done this before and must have made pretty sorry work of it. 'At any rate, I was learning something every

## MODELING MY LIFE

day in watching the master work on those two figures of Venus and Adonis. One day he looked over what I was doing, said he would spend that afternoon on the figure of cupid and that I could watch him. It was a marvelous thing to see him introduce life into that clay figure. He had the most extraordinary facility in modeling and in what seemed a few minutes to me he had changed a mud baby into a breathing, living work of art. I learned more during that afternoon than I could have learned in a lifetime in a regular art school. I even forgot, for the first time, the overpowering scent of garlic that emanated from the vicinity of that little boy model. At that time I hadn't been in Paris long enough to get accustomed to this odor, though I had tried various means of counteracting it—especially with that little Italian fellow. My most successful attempt had been to feed him with large quantities of peppermint lozenges; this, however, was a short-lived success, for MacMonnies, in criticizing the work one day, exclaimed somewhat harshly: "Good Lord, Miss Scudder, how many pounds of peppermint do you consume a day!" It seems the scent of peppermint was as unbearable to him as garlic was to me.

Ever present, permeating, robbing the days of complete happiness, was the knowledge of that sword of Damocles hanging over us—the need of money to keep us on in Paris. I had put aside the amount necessary to pay steerage passage back to New York; nothing under the sun would have made me touch that; but very soon

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

the certainty that I had better begin making plans to return home took all the joy out of life. There I was, learning my life work by leaps and bounds, and yet forced to give it all up because I had no money left. The windfall that solved this problem for many weeks was the appearance of some friends from Chicago—Mr. and Mrs. Kohlsaat. Mrs. Kohlsaat amused herself immensely in the Paris shops; but her husband found time hard to kill away from his beloved newspapers. He became interested in the Latin Quarter and the life Zulh Taft and I were living there and, more for an excuse to come over often than in admiration of our talents, he gave us an order to do a portrait bust of him, stipulating that we do it together—of course a quite impossible idea. But the fantastic idea was made entirely reasonable when he said he would pay us three hundred and fifty dollars for it. We needed money so badly at that moment that, after we heard what he was going to pay us, we would have done the work with our eyes shut if he had suggested it. And probably any one who saw the finished work thought that was exactly the way we had done it. Just before he came for the first sitting, we drew lots to see which one of us should do the face and which the back of the head. We had agreed that the ears should be the dividing line. I drew the latter. We went to work merrily, always entertained by our sitter, who told us exciting stories of world conditions, politics, finances, then usually ended the sitting by carrying us off to some smart restaurant that we would otherwise

## MODELING MY LIFE

never have seen. Not only was that bust finished, but it was actually cast in bronze, and is probably at this moment inhabiting some dark, hermetically sealed closet in Chicago. At any rate, it served its purpose, gave us a very jolly time and prolonged our stay in Paris.

When I returned to MacMonnies' studio—doing that bust had kept me away several weeks—he asked what had happened to me. I replied proudly that I had been doing a portrait bust of a famous American; and then added that I was going to remain indefinitely in Paris.

My next work in the studio was on Shakespeare's coat—that elaborately embroidered coat that covers the figure that now stands in the Congressional Library in Washington. I worked on it patiently for three whole months, never the least bit bored by the somewhat mechanical work, as I had plenty of time to study and learn a hundred things each day from the varied sculptures that were being created and executed about me. Besides, there was something thrilling in store for me at the end of that season of embroidery—as there always is after long periods of monotony.

MacMonnies, after he had seen his *Bacchante* placed in the Musée du Luxembourg, had always wanted to change the surface effect. Yes—that same famous *Bacchante* that had rocked Boston to its foundations when a lover of art had bought a bronze reproduction of it and presented it to the Library; and which had made New England conscience flare up and refuse to accept a

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

statue that depicted a dancing mother who held a baby in one hand and a bunch of grapes in the other. New York conscience must be less sensitive, as the Bacchante now has a position of honor in the Metropolitan Museum. In order to experiment with the effect desired, MacMonnies had had a replica made of this statue in plasteline. For a day or two he worked with the surface himself and when he had found what he wanted and how it should be done, he called me to look at it, showed me the finished surface of a few inches—the most beautiful surface imaginable—then told me he wanted me to go over the whole figure in the same way, very lightly and gently, using a great deal of vaseline so as not to disturb the actual modeling. He ended by telling me to take my time, not to hurry, as the work should occupy several months.

I looked longingly at the Bacchante and the work he had shown me how to do; and then very slowly I shook my head.

“What’s the matter now?” he exclaimed impatiently.

“I’m sorry—terribly sorry—but I can’t do it. I’ve got to go home. My money’s all gone.”

Only the night before Zulh and I had counted our funds and found the proceeds from the Kohlsaat bust had vanished in the same way preceding amounts had.

“How much does it take for you to live on here?” MacMonnies asked me.

“I could manage to scrape along on fifty francs a week.”

## MODELING MY LIFE

“Well—I’ll give you that. Your work is worth that much to me.”

To be told by MacMonnies that my work was worth anything to him—the man to whom I would have paid any amount that I might have had just for the privilege of studying with him—created a feeling of gratitude that has ever since been constantly with me; and not only did I feel gratitude but tremendously stimulating encouragement. I hadn’t been in Paris a year and the master I had picked out of the whole world had told me that my work was worth something to him! No wonder, from that moment on, I spent every waking hour trying to do something that would be really important and useful to him—a desire that eventually led me into making an enemy who caused me to leave Paris much sooner than I could have wished.

The fact that MacMonnies fell ill soon after I was put on the salaried list made me all the more anxious to prove myself worthy of that fifty francs a week. Though the master came almost daily to the studio and spent a short time there, he was not able to work and he did not take his usual keen interest in everything that was going on. During this time a statue of Victory—now at West Point—was being enlarged in clay by one of his French assistants. I had often stood in rapt admiration before the plaster model of this statue—a model about two feet high; and what had particularly caught my attention were the wings, which were very long and perfectly flat—very much like the wings of

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

the Pompeian Victory in the Naples Museum—and had great style. I noticed, as the assistant progressed with the enlargement, that he had lost sight of the fact that the wings were flat; or else he had decided to improve on the master's design; at any rate it seemed to me that he was working entirely in the wrong direction; and one day I saw him holding a pigeon's wing in his hand and using it as a model. The result was lacking entirely in the dashing effect of the little cast; the wings were becoming concave and weak. I resented this change immensely. Besides, a real Victory wouldn't be able to fly at all with pigeon wings; she wouldn't be able to rise from the ground.

MacMonnies, being ill all the weeks this work was progressing, had never taken the trouble to look up as high as those wings and had not yet climbed the scaffolding to examine them. Anyhow, he expected his assistants to follow closely his models. Once having assigned them a piece of work, he allowed them to go as far as they could without much comment on his part. When it seemed that the work was at a standstill, the assistant having gone as far as he could from the plaster model, MacMonnies would say: "That's enough. Work on something else." And then he would complete the work himself. No assistant was ever allowed to touch a statue or group after the master had taken it over. MacMonnies never employed "ghosts" to do his work; he did it himself; and "pot boilers" were unknown in the Impasse du Maine studios. Though he

## MODELING MY LIFE

often said that artists should not waste their time in doing anything that others could do for them, he applied this theory only to the mechanical part of building up large pieces of sculpture.

All this worked on my mind until watching the changes going on in those wings became a sort of obsession with me; I couldn't think of anything else; I thought the statue was going to be ruined, and yet what could I do! I had been told to work on the surface of the Bacchante and not on the wings of the Victory.

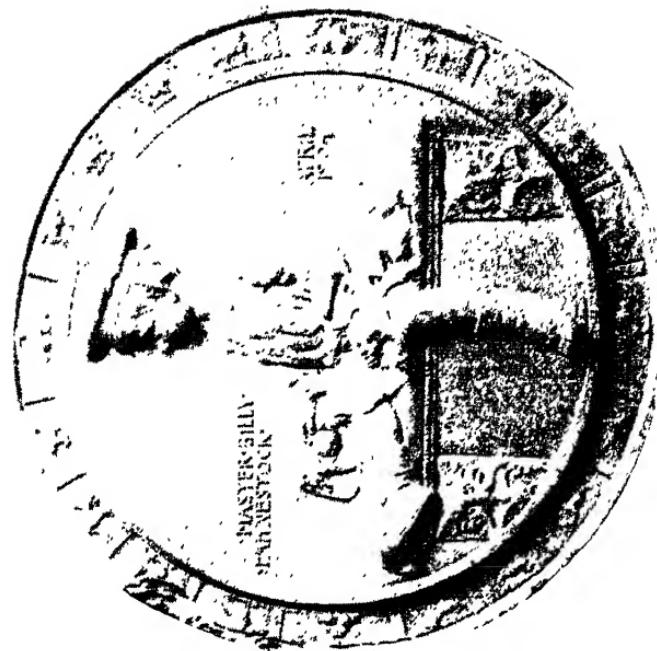
Finally I could stand it no longer; and finding MacMonnies wandering listlessly about the studio one day, I asked him what I was going to do when I finished the Bacchante.

"Anything you wish," he answered indifferently.

"I'd like so much to work a bit on those wings!" I pointed up to the Victory.

"All right. Why not! Anything you please."

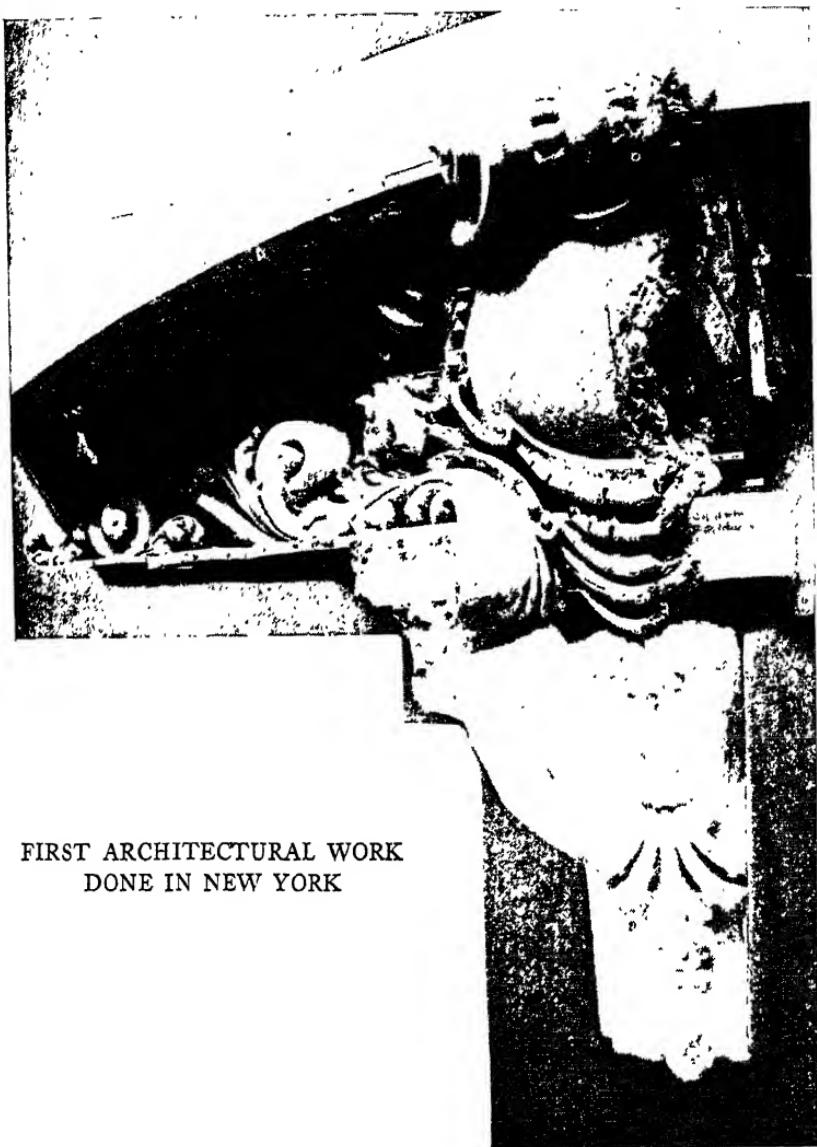
The next day was Sunday. I always worked in the studio on Sundays as I then had the place to myself and enjoyed a whole day without anything to distract my attention. I got there early the next morning—I had been given a key to let myself in with—impatient and excited with the idea of getting those wings into shape before any one could stop me. I looked about for the largest and sharpest modeling tool I could find, mounted the scaffolding and spent two heavenly hours scraping and cutting off plateline from one of the wings, uncon-



SEALS



*Left:* Seal for New York Bar Association. Large-size original in Bar Association Building, West Forty-fourth Street, New York.  
*Right:* Portrait bas relief, one in Luxembourg and one in Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



FIRST ARCHITECTURAL WORK  
DONE IN NEW YORK

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

scious of the fact that the floor, twenty feet below, was rapidly becoming littered with chunks and mounds of chipped-off plasteline feathers. Those weeks and weeks of the assistant's work were ruthlessly being demolished; my own idea was to get it completely obliterated before evening so that no one would know how many layers I had sliced away; nothing must stop me from flattening out those wings until they resembled the original model.

In the midst of my frantic efforts I heard a key turned in the studio door. I stood quite still, petrified with fear. I felt sure that if the assistant came in at that moment he wouldn't hesitate to murder me right there and entomb my body in one of the plaster casts—as had recently been done in one of the Grand Guignol horrors. But luck was with me. The door opened slowly and disclosed MacMonnies. He looked at the floor, now piled high with plasteline, started and leaned against the wall, evidently thinking the whole statue had fallen and broken into fragments; then his glance traveled up the scaffolding until it reached me.

“What in the name of God has happened?” he exclaimed.

Terror or excitement or embarrassment invariably makes me a bit shrill. I called down to him in a loud voice:

“It just had to be done, Mr. MacMonnies! Come up here and see for yourself! You haven't looked at the enlargement of these wings. That man has been putting

## MODELING MY LIFE

pigeon wings on your wonderful Victory. Come up and look at them!"

He came up very slowly, a step at a time, for he was still quite weak; and as he drew nearer and nearer my fright increased. What if he should say the assistant had done right and I all wrong! He walked slowly round the platform, looked carefully at the wing I had demolished—at least flattened out—and then at the other large pigeon wing which I hadn't had time to touch. After this he looked at his little plaster model that was standing beside me—in more ways than one as its flat wings spoke convincingly of what I had been trying to do—threw another glance at the enlarged wings, said nothing, climbed down the scaffolding, went to his desk to get a letter he had come for, crossed to the door, fitted his key in the lock, held the door open and then, for the first time, met my agonized eyes. I may have passed through moments equally terrifying—but I don't seem to recall them.

"All right, Miss Scudder," he said quietly. "Go on—just as you have been doing."

The rest of the day was pure bliss, spent in getting both those wings perfectly flat and putting into them the style of the original little model. Before I left that night I got a shovel and carefully piled all the telltale plasteline into barrels; and the next morning, you may be sure, I avoided meeting that assistant as long as possible.

It was a great satisfaction to have gained my point;

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

and more important still, to be allowed ~~to~~ <sup>good excuse</sup> those wings myself—not a very difficult work, as the model had been so carefully executed by the master. I only had to copy what had already been so precisely done. But the assistant! Of course, after that he only bided his time to get his revenge. I don't blame him. Any one would have resented such interference. But I bear him no grudge. Years later, when we met in New York, we always talked of the jolly times we had in "Mac's" studio.

When the Victory was completed, MacMonnies took me with him to the studio in the Rue de l'Arrivée, where the enlargement of his Quadriga for the arch that now stands at the entrance of Prospect Park, Brooklyn, was being done. I had seen the designs and some of the work for this group of four horses, chariot, and three women; but it was a revelation to find all the horses enlarged to their huge size and standing about the large studio awaiting the final work of the master.

While I was gazing at them, MacMonnies picked up a tool, told me to watch what he was doing, began working on one of the horses and told me to reproduce on the other three horses what he was doing. His confidence in me during those days had made me a perfect tool to repeat whatever he did. I never thought of trying any tricks of my own—as that assistant had; I was too completely imbued with admiration and appreciation of the master's work to think of anything but reproducing it as exactly as I could.

## M'DELING MY LIFE

It w<sup>as</sup> wings on<sup>the</sup> work on this Quadriga was finished that the assistant found his long-awaited opportunity. He came to the studio one day when he was sure of finding me alone and told me he had just heard some discouraging news: the worked-over Bacchante had been cast and, under the heat caused by the chemical action of the plaster while "setting," the surface had melted before the mold had hardened—all on account of too much vaseline having been used on the surface modeling. Months of work lost! After letting this distressing recountal sink in thoroughly, he went on to tell me that he had just seen MacMonnies that morning and that he had been told by him that my work on the Quadriga was wholly unsatisfactory and that he was going to have it done over entirely by some one else.

My reaction to these two discouraging stories was violent and definite. I didn't think or reason or consider anything. I felt there was only one thing for me to do; and the quicker I did it the better for every one concerned. I was an utter failure; I had been engaged and paid by the master to work for him—and my work was proving worthless, besides being a great loss in time and money to him.

As soon as MacMonnies arrived at the studio—and without waiting for him to express the disappointment the assistant had told me he felt over the Quadriga—I went up to him and announced abruptly that I was going to New York.

"What's the matter now? Money given out again?"

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

I turned away, seeking for some good excuse and of course never thinking of telling him the real cause—a sort of overwhelming despair at everything he gave me to do turning out badly—and grasping at a reason that was about as unfortunate as anything I could have chosen.

“I think it’s time I was getting back to my own country. And—I think it would be a great advantage to me now to study awhile with Saint-Gaudens. Will you give me a letter to him?”

A peculiar expression flitted across his face; then he went quickly towards the table where he kept writing materials.

“Of course I’ll give you a letter to Saint-Gaudens—half a dozen if you like. When are you leaving—tomorrow?”

His haste, his indifference, his apparent desire to get rid of me at once hurt me deeply; it also went a long way in convincing me that what the assistant had said was true.

“No. The end of the week—I think.”

“All right—I’ll get several letters ready for you. By the way—you must come to lunch with me before you go. You’ve never met my wife; have you? Come along to lunch now.”

I didn’t tell him I had met his wife the first week I had been in Paris; in fact, I said nothing. I was tasting the bitter dregs of hearing no kind words from the man who had influenced my work to such an extent and one

## MODELING MY LIFE

whom I had so consistently admired and gratefully worshiped throughout that year. I hadn't expected this off-hand way of accepting my departure; I had looked for some expression of regret, some surprise, some kind words; but this casualness, this immediate discussion of my plans—when I had none—seemed to me terribly indifferent, almost brutal.

Years later, when we were out for a long tramp over the hills above Giverny, and were talking over those days in Paris, MacMonnies turned to me abruptly and said:

"Look here, Janet, I always wanted to know what it was that really decided you to leave Paris so suddenly that time. It's long enough ago now for you to tell me."

I smiled a bit sadly. "Didn't you ever really find out?"

"I never had the slightest idea. As a matter of fact, I don't mind telling you now that I was annoyed at you—hurt, too."

"You! Why?"

"Oh, somehow I had the feeling that you had come to the conclusion that you had got all you could out of me and felt that you had better go on to Saint-Gaudens. Perhaps it was a foolish sort of sensitiveness. Anyway—that's what I felt."

The whole incident rushed back to me with its discouraging details and I recounted it to him just as it had happened. He listened with increasing surprise and amazement.

## PARIS AND MACMONNIES

"There wasn't a word of truth in it!" he burst forth. "The horses were cast and put into bronze just as you last saw them in the studio. No changes were made and none had been discussed. When you left the studio I lost my best assistant."

All of which goes to prove that misunderstandings should be threshed out with perfect frankness and honesty on both sides; otherwise the whole course of one's life may be interfered with. That misunderstanding with MacMonnies surely changed mine. If it hadn't been for that, I would never have taken that very definite step of leaving Paris and trying my luck in New York too soon.

I suppose many young women have had the pluck to face New York under the circumstances I did; though I sometimes wonder if I would dare do it again. After buying my ticket and carefully calculating every expense—especially the tips to stewards, which I always remember so poignantly not being able to give on that first voyage—I found that I would arrive in New York with exactly twenty-eight dollars, six letters of introduction to Saint-Gaudens and the address of a lodging house for women where I was told I could live on practically nothing.

## IV

### STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

AN ocean voyage gives one leisure to reflect upon the life one has left behind and make a few guesses about what the future holds in store; though I must say I found myself, after France had hidden herself in a dense Channel fog, thinking entirely of Paris with very intense longing and giving no thought at all to New York. The past year had been so filled with work, learning the technique of sculpture, and so entirely crowded with impressions and ideas, that I had had little time to think of myself and my actual daily existence. Nothing seemed real except that studio in the Impasse du Maine and what went on there. But on a boat, tucked away under a comfortable steamer rug—I had not forgotten to bring one along this time—I found myself reliving little events that had made up what might be called my material existence in Paris.

When our friends had returned from their walking trip, Zulh Taft and I had been obliged to seek other quarters; and this time we were lucky enough to get into the Girls' Club, which had been too full to take us when we first arrived in Paris. It was a delightful old house in the Rue de Chevreuse, under the direction of a charm-

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

ing French lady who took a personal interest in the young women there and mothered each one of us individually. The students who lived in the house represented every branch of art—painting, sculpture, music and architecture; and just the mere fact of living there, surrounded by so many of them, all working with enthusiasm, was tremendously stimulating. We were made extremely comfortable, had the privilege of using the large library and were often entertained with musical parties and exhibitions got up by the more advanced students; but best of all was the fact that the expense was so little that even I was able to live there until I left Paris.

I regret deeply that this delightful club for art students has now been taken over by university scholars; and especially at a time when art students need such a place more than ever, due to the tremendous increase in the cost of living in Paris. Men students still have their club, which was established by Mr. Wanamaker; but so far as I have been able to find out, women art students to-day—I am speaking of the poor ones—are forced to live about in squalid rooms, go out to cheap restaurants for their meals which are not nearly so good to-day as they were when I was a young student; in fact, cheap food in Paris to-day is very bad food. I have always felt a personal gratitude to Mrs. Whitelaw Reid for having started that Girls' Club; and I realize the loss to present-day art students since it has now been turned over to university scholars, who, when they arrive in Paris, are usually older and more experienced than art

## MODELING MY LIFE

students, besides often having some sort of scholarship which relieves them of the burden of expenses.

In retrospect, that year in Paris increased in charm; even now I realize what a friendly place it must have been to a young woman artist. For that matter, it still is. Nothing in the world enrages me so much as to hear people say Paris is no place for young women; that it offers more pitfalls than any other city; that temptations are multiplied there—all of which is ignorant nonsense. Zulh Taft and I were there quite alone, unchaperoned; she was studying painting in a studio, while I worked away at sculpture; we ate about in restaurants, we were thrown with all sorts of people who were responsible only to themselves, we had no one watching us and no one to whom we were accountable, we went to life classes in the evening and tramped home from school late at night—and we felt as protected and safe from harm as though we had been living in the heart of a family in the Middle West. I always make a point of telling nervous mothers that they need have no more fear of their daughters going to Paris to study art than in letting them go to New York; as a matter of fact, of the two places, Paris is much more likely to prove the safer one—and surely much more friendly. I speak from experience. I know both.

I realize now—though I didn't when I was lying back comfortably in that steamer chair thinking of Paris—that Fate was particularly unkind when it took me away from that delightful life and carried me off to fight a

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

battle with New York. It was much too soon; I was too young, too inexperienced, entirely too unsophisticated. But of course I didn't think so. I was sure work would be waiting for me in every studio and in every architect's office; I hadn't a single fear or doubt; my twenty-eight dollars would get me safely landed and installed in that home for working girls that I had been told about, and after that all I would have to do would be to go out and ask for a job. I had heard that success in New York meant success throughout the world; so naturally I thought of going nowhere else; that was to be my happy hunting ground.

On the boat with me was a fellow student from Paris, Matilda Brownell; she had been studying painting there and was returning to the bosom of her family—a bosom that was so broad and hospitable and kind that, after we had landed and got our trunks passed, Mrs. Brownell took me aside and invited me to go with them to their country place on Long Island.

"This isn't the time to start in to work in New York," she said. "It is entirely too hot and all of your friends will be out of town. You must come with us—for a month at least."

All my friends out of town! I didn't know a living soul there; so that didn't alter the appearance of the town very materially to me. It was a terrible temptation to go off with that delightful family that day. Nothing would have made me happier. Just looking on at the welcome Matilda's family was giving her made me

## MODELING MY LIFE

realize how desperately alone I was. But it was not the moment for me to think of making charming visits. New York was waiting for me. I must plunge at once into the vortex and get under headway.

I bade the Brownell family good-by, turned over my trunk to an expressman, with the address of the working girls' home on 16th Street, crossed on a ferry-boat and boarded a street car that would take me near my destination. I arrived very hot and tired and climbed the steps of an unsympathetic-looking brown-stone house which I had no difficulty in identifying, as it bore a large placard announcing it to be the Margaret-Louisa Home. A servant let me in, looking at me rather suspiciously as she motioned me to a door on one side of the bare hall. I knocked at the door and, opening it, was at once confronted by a woman with a very severe face looking at me over a desk. There were no other chairs in the room except the one she was sitting in, so I stood before her, rather like a culprit at the bar.

“What do you wish?” she asked in a chilly voice that was far from being a welcome to any sort of home.

“I want a room, please—the simplest, cheapest one you have.”

“Let me see your references.”

“References! Why—I haven’t any. I thought this was a home for working girls and—”

She cut me short with a snap, gave me a rather withering glance and said in a now thoroughly icy voice: “We

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

don't take strange women without personal introductions."

Perhaps it was the heat and fatigue and just getting off a steamer that made my head whirl a bit at that moment; at any rate, I don't believe I have ever felt as bewildered and abandoned as when that answer was hurled at me.

"Then—what am I going to do?" I murmured.

The woman stared at me with complete indifference, evidently not interested in my problem and not bothered with giving me a civil reply.

"Can you tell me where to go? I am a stranger here. I have no friends in town. Isn't there some sort of a boarding house near here that I could go to?"

She turned, still indifferent, to a drawer of the desk, took out a book and read out the address of a boarding house on 11th Street. I wrote it down quickly; and then thought of my trunk.

"I've had my trunk sent here. Will you please tell the man to bring it to this address?"

"I can't take any responsibility about your trunk. The man might refuse to carry it to a changed address."

"But—I've paid him for it. Perhaps—if you will let him leave it here until—"

"We have no place for the trunks of persons not stopping in the house. If they let you have a room at that boarding house you'd better hurry back here before the expressman gets away."

## MODELING MY LIFE

I rushed down to 11th Street, was shown a hall bedroom reeking with the scent of cooking cabbage—an incredibly dirty place which cost seven dollars a week, food included—engaged it and ran back to the “home” for strange young women “*with references*,” arriving there soon enough to find the expressman and get my trunk safely conveyed to the new address.

By the time I had returned to my hall bedroom dinner was served and I had my first experience at a long table at which a very poor dinner was doled to poor people in about as grubby a way as I had ever seen. Later, I went out to get a breath of fresh air and found my way to Union Square, where I sat down on a solitary bench. Something was wrong, I knew that; and yet I didn’t know quite what. My return to my native land was anything but what I had expected it to be; the woman in charge of the Margaret-Louisa Home, the boarding-house keeper, even the expressman were all somehow so much less friendly than I had thought they would be; each one had been harsh and indifferent in an individual way and appeared to consider me an intruder on their time and occupation. I began to wonder what was the matter with me and to become unaccountably depressed; then—such is the buoyancy of youth and hope—I decided it was all due to the oppressive heat; it was enough to put any one out of humor.

The next morning—unrefreshed from a stifling night—I got an early start, made my way to Saint-Gaudens’ studio, found it closed and the sculptor away at his

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

summer home in Vermont. The rest of the day I spent in calling at architects' offices and asking if there were anything needed in the way of architectural decorations. On the whole, that second day was not so discouraging as the first; I was politely enough received and once or twice some interest was shown and some questions asked about my experience in Paris; but I returned to that miserable little hall bedroom with no special feeling of elation. Still, I was only spending a dollar a day; what was left of my twenty-eight dollars would carry me over three weeks; and I felt perfectly sure that by that time I would have landed more jobs than I could possibly accept. And, as a matter of fact, it was only four days before I had landed my first order.

My first order! The first apparent job New York ever gave me—a lamp post to be erected on Union Square at the corner of Broadway. It sounded tremendously important and impressive. It isn't there to-day, so no one need waste time trying to find it; as a matter of fact, it never was there; I might go even farther and say at once that there never was any possibility or intention of its being there. It was just one of those imaginary things that Fate created in order that I might have the traditional experience through which every young woman working for her living apparently has to pass.

The old fellow—he, too, followed tradition perfectly as the tempter is invariably depicted as senile—received me most cordially and took me into his private office,

## MODELING MY LIFE

where a large number of drawings of New York buildings, his own work, decorated the walls. After he felt that I had been sufficiently impressed—which I really was—he pulled up a chair for me near his desk, sat down and then told me he was entirely at my disposal. It was only then that I realized that he had taken me for a client and not an applicant. When I explained, he didn't appear in the least disappointed; indeed, he seemed all the more interested; and in a shorter time than it takes to tell he had grown enthusiastic at my appearing at such an opportune moment; it was pure luck for him, he said, as he was just then looking for a sculptor to design a lamp post that was to be put up on the corner of Broadway and Union Square. Would I like to do it? My gratitude at that moment was so great that I felt perfectly sure that I had at last found my real friend in that terribly harsh city; I even began to think the old fellow was quite charming—which nothing but gratitude would ever have made me feel, for he was a rather awful-looking old German with blotched face and bulging eyes.

You see, this story is perfectly in character with such incidents; the element of gratitude is always introduced; Bertha M. Clay and Ouida never failed to stress that sentiment as a palliating excuse for the poor girl's downfall. Well—when my gratitude was well aroused, it was given another tremendous push by being told that if I would undertake the work I would be paid thirty dollars in advance—in fact, that very day, at once. By

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

the time I left that office with thirty dollars in my purse my impressions of New York were completely changed; instead of being a heartless, cold place, it was everything that was warm-hearted. And this reminds me of a remark Julia Marlowe once made to me when I was complaining bitterly of the unfriendliness of New York: "It's all very well to talk about it that way now. Just wait until you have made your success and you will think it the nicest place in the world."

I did think it quite the nicest place that day (Paris began to suffer by comparison) and I went on thinking it the nicest place for a whole week—a hectic week in which I found a studio on 17th Street just off Union Square, where my future masterpiece was to stand—I could actually see the sacred spot from my window. I took the studio at once and paid the first month's rent in advance, fourteen dollars. It was called a furnished studio, though the furniture consisted only of a couch and four chairs; but at any rate it seemed like heaven after that awful boarding house and its more awful boarders.

I began preliminary sketches for the famous lamp post, made several designs and when they were finished carried them to the office of my good angel. He was off for the week end, so I left my address and a note asking him to let me know when he returned so that I could submit the designs for his approval. The following day a note came from him saying he would call at my studio that afternoon to discuss the matter with me. He was showing himself even kinder than I had expected and once

## MODELING MY LIFE

more my gratitude grew apace; I rushed about trying to make the studio look presentable and tacking up the designs to show to the best advantage.

He came late that afternoon, quite spick and span in summer attire, made some slight pretense of looking at my sketches and then lost no time in letting me know that they were not the cause of his very deep interest. There is no necessity of going into the details of that visit; its counterpart has been written about hundreds of times; the exact conversation might be found in a dozen novels. The main point is that the interview ended abruptly with the visitor being shown the door and my locking it securely after him. The only question that should be answered—and I have no intention of avoiding it—is: What became of the thirty dollars paid in advance? I might as well confess right here that half of it went for the first month's rent of the studio and the rest in buying canned baked beans. In novels the poor girl undergoes all sorts of heartrending privations to return the money. That didn't bother me in the least. I had gone to the expense of moving from the boarding house, buying drawing materials and spending several days in studying up designs—all of which quieted my conscience with regard to that thirty dollars. I felt I had earned it.

This adventure deepened all my first impressions of the dreariness and harshness of New York—impressions that had plenty of time to become intensified as those hot, endless summer days dragged along without a single

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

friend appearing and without the smallest nibble at a job to break the monotony. It was another one of those definitely black periods which I hadn't experienced since childhood. If there had been some sort of a students' club, some meeting place where I should have had at least the comfort of exchanging a few words with another human being, it would have been much easier for me to get along; but there was no place of the kind that I knew of.

Those long hot days began with a frugal breakfast—milk and bread; then I would put the studio in order, removing all traces of the bedroom it was at night and turning it into a workshop. The rest of the morning I usually spent in drawing, though many mornings I felt I should profit more by looking at the work of others and tramped up to the Metropolitan Museum, where I spent hours in studying the sculpture and in painting—though I must say there is an extraordinary contrast between what that museum is to-day and what it was then. In those days the guards—more really policemen—apparently viewed every one who entered as under suspicion. Once, when I had taken a position near a column in order to get a view of the back of a statue, a guard rushed up to me and said no one was allowed to go behind the statues! At lunch time I returned to the studio and prepared the simple meal that never varied and that did not take any time or skill to prepare—a can of baked beans and a glass of milk. I had heard that there was a great deal of

## MODELING MY LIFE

nourishment in beans; at any rate I found them the most filling thing I could buy for fifteen cents. In the afternoon I went about from one architect's office to another's—always with hope and always in vain; though I invariably succeeded in seeing the architect himself—due probably to my saying to the office boy that I wanted to see the head of the firm, mentioning his name and acting as if I were a client who was on the verge of ordering a Venetian palace built on Long Island. That first experience had taught me something. After an afternoon of rebuffs, footsore, hot and weary, I would usually—not every day but almost every other day—drop into a friendly little restaurant on Sixth Avenue where, for twenty-five cents, I could have dinner, my only square meal. And it was square, there is no doubt about that—all put on the table at once, from soup to ice cream, each little dab in its own bird-bath dish, the meat growing cold and the ice cream melting before I could finish the soup. On those evenings when I felt twenty-five cents was too much to spend on dinner—having already wasted ten cents on street cars that day—I would dine in my studio on the same old menu of baked beans and milk. But the hardest part of the day to get through was the long summer evening. Can anything be more utterly dismal than a summer evening in a city without a soul to speak to! If the air was unbearably stifling, I would often wander out to Union Square and sit there on a bench for an hour or two—which invariably increased my depression and loneliness. Those

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

other benches were filled with derelicts and loafers—the failures of life. I was too young then to feel any surge of sympathy towards them; they only filled me with disgust and an even greater desire for work—hard, satisfying work that would fill my empty life to overflowing. When I could stand it no longer I would leave the bench, walk slowly back to the studio and creep into my couch bed without turning on the light.

Day after day of this monotonous, cheerless existence had passed by when a letter from my sister in Chicago brought a little light. She was troubled and anxious at my being quite alone in New York and she begged me to come and make my home with her, reinforcing her invitation with a check for twenty-five dollars to pay for the railway ticket. I never really considered accepting her invitation, though I did turn it over in my mind a great deal, just to convince myself that I had no intention of being a sort of old-maid aunt to my sister's children—that hopeless, drab, dull career that so many women let themselves drift into from lack of courage and energy to cut out on their own. However, I kept the check for twenty-five dollars. It swelled my funds in a most encouraging way. I now had almost fifty dollars in hand and only a few weeks more of summer left. Some friends have insisted that I could not possibly have got through those months on such a small amount; but I always successfully scouted their doubts by furnishing a list of my expenses, which ran as follows:

## MODELING MY LIFE

Studio rent by month.....	\$14.00
Square meal every other day, for month..	4.00
Milk, beans, bread .....	9.00

There were literally no other expenses. I did my own washing. I never took a street car unless I was actually worn out. And it goes without saying that I never bought anything, least of all clothes. On the whole it was not the struggle to keep alive that I now look back on as being so dreary; it was the utter loneliness of those days. I hadn't a soul to say good-morning or good-night to; I might have been living on a desert island so far as companionship went; and the experience suggested to me something that I have never forgotten—that loneliness is the root of almost all evils; it drives people into all sorts of strange actions; it develops weird quirks in character; it makes for despair and crime—and all quite naturally so, for God didn't intend us to be lonely; He meant us all to be parts of a give and take machine that brings out the best in us.

I remember how warmly I welcomed a woman who came to my studio during that hopeless period. Even before she had spoken I felt like throwing my arms about her and thanking her—and God—for her appearance. As a matter of fact, it was only a few minutes before we were sitting side by side on the couch, exchanging confidences. She was up against it, too, trying to make a living at journalism. An editor

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

had told her that he would like an article on women art students in Paris and in some way she had heard of me and found my address. Would I help her by telling her of my experiences in the studios of Paris? We spent a very happy day together; I even grew spendthrift and took her to my square meal restaurant and blew her off to a twenty-five-cent lunch; then we returned to the studio and I told her everything I knew. The next day she was back again with a photographer from the magazine and took several photographs of my studio, which I had great fun in putting into horrid disorder, adding a few bottles to give it a Bohemian touch and making it look as sordid as the typical studio of a poor art student is supposed to look. The photograph was to be called "A Paris Atelier" and it amused me to make it as squalid as I could. As a figure was needed to give life to the picture I consented to pose with my back to the camera.

That woman went out of my life as quickly as she had come into it; I never saw her again; and I might never have remembered the incident if, several weeks later, I had not run across a copy of the *Metropolitan Magazine* and found an article in it signed "Janet Scudder," a most exaggerated, utterly silly, vulgarly written article which made me blush with shame and fury. The illustration was labeled "Janet Scudder in her studio" instead of "A Paris Atelier" as I had been told it would be called. The article made my friends even more furious than it did me; even MacMonnies

## MODELING MY LIFE

wrote me from Paris that I had better stick to sculpture—that writing was obviously not my field—but if I insisted on writing to try to write the truth.

That second experience with a journalist—the first in Chicago had been hardly more successful—did me a great deal of harm in that it prejudiced me for a long time against a profession in which I now count some of my best friends. It had something to do with my playing a trick on a journalist many years later that I still regret deeply. It happened when I was living in my own house at Ville d'Avray, just at the edge of the St. Cloud wood. I had been asked by letter to give an interview to a woman who was representing a New York paper and in Paris to write about famous American artists—her words, not mine. The letter came at the time that I was busily at work on a fountain for Mr. Rockefeller's estate on the Hudson and did not find me in a very expansive state of mind. However, I invited her to come out to see me; when she was announced I was just receiving a call from an old and intimate friend, Mabel Dodge. We both complained bitterly of the interruption and Mrs. Dodge suggested that I be relieved of talking about myself by letting her receive the journalist and assume the rôle of sculptor. In a moment of madness I accepted the suggestion and went down to meet the stranger, explaining that I was Miss Scudder's secretary and had been sent to say that she would be received in the studio. I led the way to the studio and found, to my consternation, that Mrs.

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

Dodge had thrown on a sculptor's apron, picked up the biggest tool she could find and was standing over a clay fountain in a most threatening attitude. I had a quick, alarming vision of the work of months being destroyed, and couldn't resist rushing forward and grabbing the dangerous implement away from my substitute's hands.

"Oh, Miss Scudder!" I exclaimed. "You promised me you would not work any more to-day. You know you are exhausted. Besides—this lady has come to talk to you about your life—your work—your plans for the future—your—"

Mrs. Dodge turned imperious eyes upon the stranger. "My life!" she murmured. "Of what interest is that! My work is my life. Nothing else matters except work, work, work!"

The journalist was thrilled by this time—and quite rightly so as Mrs. Dodge had assumed a pose and expression that would have impressed any one—and got out pad and pencil to jot down notes.

"But the world adores details, Miss Scudder," she said. "Especially intimate details. Shall we begin with the place you were born in?"

Mrs. Dodge gave me a troubled glance. "Where I was born," she repeated, not having the slightest idea where my birthplace was.

"Miss Scudder was born in Terre Haute, Indiana," I answered for her.

"When?" the journalist asked.

Again Mrs. Dodge turned to me.

## MODELING MY LIFE

"Miss Scudder usually refers to the '70's as being the time of her birth," I replied coolly.

"The late or early '70's?" On mature reflection I think that journalist was getting what she deserved.

"It might be diplomatic to make it late," I answered, now quite cold.

"And her early education?"

By this time Mrs. Dodge saw that she could not keep up the delusion any longer and picking up that dangerous implement again rushed out of the room with a far from reassuring gesture.

I calmed the journalist with the assurance that Miss Scudder was in a most nervous state and that talking about her past usually excited her, that I knew the details of her life perfectly and would tell her anything she wished to know. I took her into the drawing room, gave her tea and more information about myself than she could ever use. She went away perfectly satisfied and with all sorts of apologies for having intruded upon such a great artist; and the next day she sent the fake Miss Scudder some flowers and a note of sincere thanks.

I wish this were the end of that story; but it isn't. Two weeks later I went to a tea party and was just entering the room when the hostess called out to me: "Hello, Janet Scudder—come over here!" As I went towards her my roving eye came bang up against the frozen glance of that journalist. It was one of those moments in which the hair turns snow-white. I even

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

remember glancing in a mirror to see the process under way; and while doing so thrilled with an inspiration that would have been a credit to Napoleon. I swerved away from my hostess and went straight up to that journalist, extended my hand and said I was so glad to find her there as I had something most important to say to her. She met my onrush frigidly; and it took real force on my part to get her off to herself. Then I sat down beside her—I think I even held her hand—and began explanations.

“Don’t judge me too harshly,” I said. “I think I can make you understand why I did what you naturally think is unpardonable. For some time I have had the keenest desire to look at my sculpture with the impersonal eye of the bystander—I mean with the cold, critical eye of the person who hadn’t done it. And when you came to interview me, without ever having seen me, I felt the long awaited occasion had arrived. I hope you will forgive me and believe I am quite sincere. And do give me the pleasure of lunching with me to-morrow. There is a great deal more I want to tell you.”

She accepted my explanation gracefully and came to lunch with me; and later on, when we had become friends, I told her the truth. It is a great relief to clear the decks as soon as possible—and perfect honesty is the only way of getting débris safely out of the way.

## MODELING MY LIFE

By the time Matilda Brownell and her family returned to town, I was facing a complete disappearance of funds; and during my first dinner with the family—only those who have lived for weeks and weeks on baked beans can realize what sitting at a table with flowers and candles and eating a delicious dinner perfectly served meant to me—I made a full confession of my discouraging situation. Mr. Brownell immediately took an interest in my problem, told me he admired pluck more than anything in the world and said he was going to make it his special work to see that it was rewarded—a promise that he fulfilled with amazing rapidity.

At that time he was secretary of the New York Bar Association, which had just decided to have a seal made. He mentioned me as an applicant for the work and in spite of objections against an unknown sculptor—and especially a woman—being given such an important work, he won out by guaranteeing that I could do the seal to the satisfaction of the association, saying he would refund the money if my work was unsuccessful.

This was my first really serious commission—for which I was paid seven hundred and fifty dollars in four instalments; though I must say I still cling to that mythical lamp post as my first job. It had something much more romantic—sordidly romantic—about it than such an eminently respectable thing as a seal for a bar association. Without that experience I might have gone on boasting in a tiresome way that all the stories

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

of struggling women are without foundation—as they never happened to me.

My first encounter with the committee that was to choose a design for the seal almost ended disastrously. They gave me the dimensions they had decided on and a photograph of a Minerva who held a spear in one hand, while the other, quite empty, was outstretched as if clutching for something. I tried to persuade the committee that the subject was not very original. When asked to express my ideas, I suggested several ideas, but to no avail; they must have a Minerva; their minds were made up to that.

“But surely not with that outstretched, clutching hand!” I protested.

“What’s the matter with that hand?” they demanded.

“Somehow it’s unpleasantly suggestive for a lawyers’ association. It looks as if she were reaching out frantically for her fee and backing up her demands with a spear.”

The committee laughed and compromised, allowing me to model a small victory in the empty hand—this no doubt symbolic that the fee had been paid; and the next day I left that studio on 17th Street and moved into a real one farther uptown, having received the first instalment on the work for the seal and feeling like nothing less than a millionaire with one hundred and eighty-seven dollars and fifty cents in my pocket.

Now the goose began to hang high, very high indeed; I had a real job, a real studio and some friends to spend

## MODELING MY LIFE

the evenings with occasionally. I began to go about to studios, now the sculptors were returning to town, and made my first visit to Saint-Gaudens, carrying along, you may be sure, those six letters of introduction MacMonnies had given me.

I was immensely impressed the first time I saw Saint-Gaudens; his appearance fitted in so perfectly with his beautiful and distinguished name; I felt at once that he had lived up to it in both looks and manner. Nothing could possibly give a better description of his work than his name. It is exactly the same with Michael Angelo, Donatello, Benvenuto Cellini, Verrocchio, Ghiberti—each one of these names repeats the character of the work of the artist. No man named Augustus Saint-Gaudens could have failed to make an impression on his epoch. The mere sound of the name is the best portrait of the man that could be found. Just repeat it over and over and you will have his image before you: a high forehead topped with a mass of tawny brown hair, deep-set eyes, a large finely drawn nose, a reddish pointed beard and a fine, patriarchal manner accompanied by carefully chosen words.

His welcome was cordial, but he became so interested in those six letters from MacMonnies that he forgot all about me—letters which MacMonnies had told me were written in varying vein so that one of them should fit the mood in which Saint-Gaudens happened to be at the time he read it. Both of these men were very clever and amusing letter writers and often, in the form of

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

letters of introduction for young sculptors who wanted to meet Saint-Gaudens in New York or MacMonnies in Paris, they would write each other long communications; and I have been told that sometimes, on the same boat with the aspiring young sculptor who carried the letter of introduction next his heart, went a second letter in the mail bag which contained a complete retraction of all the laudatory phrases in the first one. Whether or not this happened in my case, I don't know; though I'm inclined to think, judging from Saint-Gaudens' indifference to me, that it may have. However, he did express himself as glad to welcome me to New York, hoped I would have a pleasant sojourn there, and then told me of his reasons for wishing to leave it himself; he was utterly weary of the glittering blue skies of New York and the roar of the elevated trains; he felt the call to cross the seas; he must get back to the calm of Paris and the gray skies of France; at that moment—he illustrated his words with broad gestures of his long, slender hands—he was just dovetailing his work so that everything might be finished and he could get away.

He showed me the monument for the Boston Common on which he was then working—the one of Shaw on horseback leading a regiment of colored soldiers over whom floated an angel—a work of singular beauty.

I always think of the amusing contrast between that first visit to Saint-Gaudens in New York and one several

## MODELING MY LIFE

years later in Paris, when he invited me to come to see his equestrian statue of Sherman which now stands opposite the Plaza Hotel at the entrance to Central Park. As I was leaving I said:

“Are you much happier in Paris than you were in New York?”

“Oh, no,” he replied. “These gray skies are killing me and the mists of Paris are ruining my health. I must get back to those lovely blue skies of New York.”

I don’t think the skies had really anything to do with Saint-Gaudens’ discomfort; it was more likely caused by the very sumptuous and very red apartment in which he was living. Everything in it seemed to be red, at least everything that wasn’t gilt—one of those dreadful furnished affairs without comforts or charm. Then, also, he had waited too long to pull up stakes; his place in America was too well padded and secure for him to be happy anywhere else.

I had expected him to take some personal interest in me that first year in New York, as I was his pupil’s pupil; but his interest never went further than words—except in one case, which had to do with the alphabet which he and Stanford White had evolved for the inscriptions on monuments. The moment I saw the lettering on the Shaw monument, I realized that great style had been achieved in the inscription; the sheer beauty of the letters caught the eye before the words were read—an unusual thing, as most monuments carry the inscription as a sort of enforced obligation. Saint-



BOY WITH FISH

Bought by Luxembourg Museum, Paris.

Photos A. B. Hoyart, New York



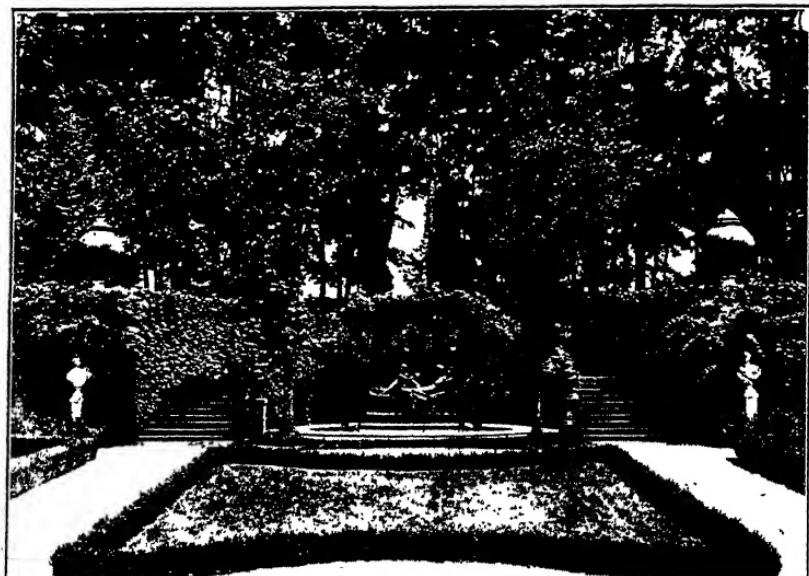
FROG FOUNTAIN

One on estate of Mrs. Saunders (Anne Archbold), Bar Harbor, Maine, and one in Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



FROG FOUNTAIN

This is the fountain mentioned as being shown in studio of Bay Emmett (Mrs. Rand). Bought by Stanford White for the estate of James Breese. Also one bought by Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



WALL FOUNTAIN

On Jennings estate, Long Island

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

Gaudens had made the inscription an important part of the whole design, no doubt inspired by the study of the beautiful and effective use of words on old Roman tombs and pedestals. I gazed at those letters a long time, until I thought I had discovered what it was that gave them their cachet—the large round O's and the very stylish, somewhat archaic M's. They made such an impression on me that, after I left the studio, I went straight down to that very beautiful memorial to Farragut in Madison Square and there studied the effect of the same letters. When I told Saint-Gaudens that I was anxious to get the same style into my letters on the seal for the Bar Association, he said he would be delighted to give me the model and that same day sent me a small package which contained the entire alphabet, each letter cut out separately. This was a rare and useful gift which has ever since been invaluable to me; and it was a particular satisfaction to use this style of lettering when I, with seven or eight sculptors who had been associated with Stanford White in his work in New York, was invited to contribute to the work on his memorial—those bronze gates erected for the University of New York. I chose for my part of the work the inscription.

After my first visit with Saint-Gaudens I called at Daniel Chester French's studio, where I found out, as I had at Saint-Gaudens', that no real help was going to be given to a struggling young sculptor who was very proud of calling herself the pupil of MacMonnies.

## MODELING MY LIFE

I must say that I was somewhat surprised at the extremely polite but excessively frigid reception that I received from most of those studios. If I had counted on a helping hand from any of them I very probably would have starved to death—as a young woman at that time actually did. After her death it was found out that she possessed considerable talent but, receiving no encouragement and being very poor, had lived for a whole year on ten cents a day. The National Sculpture Society turned out in full force at her funeral and every one was terribly shocked to learn the facts of her struggle and why she had died—when it was too late to do any good. This incident made a very bitter impression on me—I came very near to having the same experience myself. Conditions are indeed very hard in America for young sculptors, but it is not a difficult problem to overcome, if only successful sculptors would get together and agree to divide up the work that comes to them in impossible quantities. There is an enormous amount of sculpture commissions given out every year, not only in New York, but all over the country; and quite naturally these commissions are given to sculptors who have already made their names. It is a well-known fact that when one of our most famous sculptors died a few years ago he left a list of commissions that would have taken him several lifetimes to finish; and yet it never occurred to him to turn over some of this work to his own brother, who was doing distinguished but unsuccessful work and living in poverty and discouragement.

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

ment. No one who has made a success has any right to be selfish about passing on what he hasn't the time to do himself. If we don't help others towards the success we have achieved we have no right to success ourselves.

When the Bar Association seal was finished, the original model cast in bronze and placed on the wall behind the secretary's desk; a reduction of the seal made and the final payment given me, I felt very much like the man who has toiled up to the top of a very high mountain and stops, turns round and looks down on the incredible distance he has come. Very likely it was this feeling of looking down that carried me into renting a studio in the tower of Carnegie Hall, which had just then been completed. At first it was rather wonderful living in that tower and looking down on New York instead of looking up at it. I often amused myself watching the long stream of human ants coming out of the concert hall below and making their way along the street, all filled up with music and rushing home to fill up with food. I felt tremendously superior, living up there so high, though I'm not sure that it is a good thing for artists to live in towers and to feel superior. My best work has never been done far from the earth, and for that reason I find myself much preferring a ground floor studio for sculpture. Perhaps the bird's-eye view of people and streets is not conducive to the pursuit of the fine arts. At any rate, my studio in that tower was not a success—in spite of the fact that I was

## MODELING MY LIFE

very proud of being able to pay forty dollars a month for it. The large building beneath me, filled with pianists and singers and dancers, hundreds of voices, thousands of pianos, seemed to disconnect me definitely from the earth and sculpture. On the floor just under me a dancer who has since become famous was beginning her first studies. The music chosen to inspire her steps and poses was Nevin's "Narcissus." It was played for weeks and weeks, all night, all day, over and over again. I can never hear that music now without showing some symptoms of hysteria. But the way Isadora Duncan worked should be a lesson to every one. No wonder she had a great success; no one with such constant application to an idea could possibly have failed,

A few odd jobs began to come my way, principally the architectural ornament. A rising young architect gave me some ornamental work to do for a building he was putting up on East 65th Street. This work is still in existence and so corroborates my story, which the mythical lamp post never did. The first design was a ram's head, which turned out successfully and was reproduced several times in stone under the eaves of the building. The second piece of work, a plinth with capital, was not so fortunate, because the design was turned over to an assistant who was delegated to see that my work was architecturally correct. This assistant's special job was most enlightening to me; it taught me a great deal about the necessity of understanding the psychology of one's clients. She—yes, the assistant in

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

this case was a woman—made a specialty of closets; in a way she was the greatest expert on closets the world has ever known; and as her employer was devoting most of his time to building residences, she became an invaluable help to him. Often when his women clients showed signs of becoming a bit troublesome about the designs of their houses, the architect would turn them over to his assistant to discuss some arrangement of closets and immediately everything else would be forgotten and he would be left undisturbed to go on with his original scheme for the house.

But the closet expert and I didn't hit it off so well as those ladies whose interests center about closets. When I showed her my clay model for the plinth, she looked at it through obviously unsympathetic eyes and said it was out of plumb.

"All right," I said. "Which way does it lean?"

"You will have to find that out for yourself. I haven't the time to do your plumbing for you."

"But here is a plumb line. Won't you just plumb the plinth? You will then see that it is perfectly upright."

"No—I won't. I know that plinth is out of plumb. It isn't necessary for me to use a plumb line to see that. If you don't feel it is not straight you will never be able to get it right."

I tried desperately to get out of the room calmly—and failed. "I know what's the matter with my plinth," I said at the door.

## MODELING MY LIFE

“What?” demanded the closet expert.

“There’s no place in it for you to put a closet!”

And with that thrust I gave up the job and left the office.

Always I have felt, even during those first hard days of struggle, that an artist’s most precious possession is his independence of spirit. If he begins to bow down to people and their tastes and peculiarities he is lost—so far as ever doing really good work goes. He may make a good living out of such methods, but he will never be a fine artist. I couldn’t help feeling that I had to take a stand with that imperious closet expert; just as I had to take a stand with an equally imperious mother a few weeks later—though in each case I lost a perfectly good job.

The imperious mother gave me an order to do portrait medallions of her two children. She belonged to the type of the newly rich and engaged artists as she engaged cooks. If the artist’s work did not please her, she discharged him just as she would discharge a cook who burned an omelette. I was delighted to get this order—it had come to me through the success of the Bar Association seal and I had become very much interested in low-relief portraits. I was very ambitious, and even thought, during those days, of making this my special field and becoming a great medalist. There is no telling how far I might have gone in that direction if my first order for this sort of work had not ended so disastrously.

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

The lady informed me, through her secretary, that it would be impossible for the children to be brought to my studio and that, in order to do the work, I would have to come to her country place. I agreed to this readily enough and went off to the country, where I was met at the station by a large automobile and finally deposited in the vast hall of my client's country house and left to wait patiently, as manicurists, and coiffeurs and masseuses are forced to do. The lady finally appeared, nodded casually and, after being reminded of my mission, said:

"Oh, yes—you're the person who is going to do the portraits of the children! You will find them playing in the sand. Of course they can't be brought into the house now. You will have to work with them out-of-doors. And I shall have to ask you to be very careful not to interrupt their games."

I went down to the sand pile and began to study the children with the success you can easily imagine when you realize that they were hopping about all the time from one sand pile to another; and to add to my discomfort the wind was blowing a tremendous gale. I worked until lunch time, had lunch with the family and left that afternoon with the promise, however, extracted with much difficulty from the Louis Quatorze mother, that the next sitting should be arranged inside the house. The next time, though I went out by appointment, no automobile met me at the station and as there was no vehicle to carry me the five miles to the

## MODELING MY LIFE

house, I sat in the station until the train passed that would carry me back to New York. From town, I wrote the lady that, if she wished me to do the portraits of her children, she would have to send them to my studio. She finally consented to this and sent me one of her charming little boys, always carefully watched over by an English governess, for several sittings; in this way I managed to pull off a fairly good piece of portraiture which I had cast in plaster.

Before this work was completed, another order had come in for two medallion portraits of people living in Washington. This necessitated going to the Capital, where I carried with me the bas-relief of the little boy—which the mother had not yet seen. I was so pleased with it that I thought it would be a good recommendation to have with me; a very wise decision, too, as a reporter called on me soon after my arrival in Washington, saw the portrait of the boy and wrote an article about it. Thinking this would please the difficult mother, I cut out the article and mailed it to her, receiving in return a most scorching letter in which she said I had no right to have the medallion of her child cast, much less shown, before she had approved of it.

I couldn't resist taking the same stand with her that I had taken with that closet expert. I never let the mother see the medallion of her little boy and I never let her have it. It was a tremendous satisfaction to discharge her before she discharged me. And I learned something from the experience that has been most use-

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

ful to me in avoiding similar difficulties. From that day I did not accept a commission to do a portrait medallion without a written contract that stipulated the conditions of payment, the number of sittings in my studio and, above everything else, that no criticism would be permitted while the work was in progress. I still think—though I have long since given up doing portraits—that such contracts make the only possible system by which artist and client can work successfully together over portraits. Once the client makes up his mind to let the artist work independently, he is relieved of all responsibility and can sit quietly and patiently, giving himself entirely into the hands of the artist and not being bothered with the struggle that goes on during the process of finding the likeness. Of course, if he thinks he can do the work better than the artist—and that his family can make invaluable suggestions—he ought to do the modeling himself and not employ a sculptor. To portray nature, a search that should be long and serious and which is often filled with discouragement, the artist should be left entirely free to go his own way. My form of contract stated all my conditions very fully, and after it was read and signed I usually had very pleasant relations with my sitters.

By the time I was well into the second year, my first attack on New York—there were others!—had been carried through with a certain amount of success; at least I had squeezed a living out of the huge city.

## MODELING MY LIFE

Portrait medallions and architectural ornament work—especially one well-paid commission for sculptural decorations for an enormous business building on Beaver Street—had increased my earnings considerably. But after the first thrill of finding that I could support myself, I began to realize that making a living was not everything; and, most of all, I had no intention of wasting my life doing odd jobs and merely looking on while well-known sculptors got all the commissions for important work. Wire-pulling was always impossible for me; I couldn't help feeling a very deep contempt for it; it took all the dignity and sincerity out of one's work and out of one's life. It *was* possible for an artist to be independent, I kept repeating to myself; but of course to be independent one had to make a name; that would take time; and the question was: Could I afford to take the time? I decided in the affirmative.

I was in the midst of considering a proposed memorial that had been brought to me by Mr. Brownell—a portrait medallion with inscription for the founder of some small college in New York State. There was no photograph of the gentleman in existence and as he had died many years before, there was no clue to work on except the tradition that he was supposed to resemble Benjamin Franklin. I think it must have been the name of Franklin and the recollection of his little house in Passy that I had once seen that sent my thoughts racing back to Paris.

## STRUGGLING WITH NEW YORK

"Do you think I might do this memorial in Paris?" I asked Mr. Brownell.

"I see no objection," he replied. "But why Paris?"

"Because I've saved up enough money to return there now. I can live in Paris much cheaper than in New York and I can continue my studies, which I left rather abruptly."

Mr. Brownell consented to the memorial being done in Paris and also decided to send his daughter back to continue her studies in painting. He asked me to dine with the family that evening and we were in the midst of discussing plans, all of us very happy and excited, when a servant came into the drawing-room and announced in a frightened voice that the French femme de chambre was having a fit. Mrs. Brownell rushed to the rescue and, after calming the woman to some extent, demanded the cause of her trouble, which was due, it seems, to hearing talk about going to Paris while she had to remain in New York. The thought was unbearable to her and had brought on hysterics. Mr. Brownell, hearing the groans and wails of the homesick woman—and always sympathetic and kind—quieted her completely by telling her he would send her along as maid to his daughter and myself; and so Parot, wreathed in smiles, pulled herself together and began instant preparations for our departure.

When I was once more on a boat, steaming down the harbor and watching New York rise out of the dusk

## MODELING MY LIFE

with its millions of electric lights, I nodded at it, smiled and waved my hand.

“On the whole,” I said to it, “you haven’t been so bad to me—not nearly so bad as you have been to lots of others, though you did try pretty hard to get the best of me. But you haven’t given me yet what I want. You will though. Just wait and see!”

Matilda Brownell found me leaning on the rail, mumbling to myself.

“What’s the matter?” she asked. “Already regretting leaving New York?”

“I was just telling it”—with a wave of the hand towards the now fading city—“that it has something I want—something that I’m going to make it give me.”

## V

## FINDING MYSELF

THE next three years of my life were very happy ones, spent most of the time in one place, a little house on the Boulevard Raspail at the corner of the Rue Boissonade, where Matilda Brownell and I and the always indispensable and efficient Parot set up housekeeping. It was a nice little house, two stories, with a most correct, even demure façade of the XVIII Century, and over the door was a head of Venus. The house next door, exactly like ours, was decorated in more sedate manner, with the bust of Homer.

After we had signed the lease—a ridiculously small amount compared with prices to-day—we were very much delayed in getting established by my desire to buy a dog at once. I had always said that if I ever had a house of my own the first thing I would have would be a dog; and nothing could persuade me from finding that dog immediately. I dragged Matilda about with me for days to all those fascinating and delightful dog shops of Paris, when of course we ought to have been haunting second-hand furniture places and finding bargains in beds and chairs and tables. In the end the dog was found, a Scotch terrier that we called Singe, because he looked rather like a monkey; and this ques-

## MODELING MY LIFE

tion being got out of the way—or more correctly speaking put in the way—we went ahead with the house. The entire furnishings hardly came to two hundred dollars; though later on we began to pick up other things, an old table or desk, a rare bit here and there, and gradually some really beautiful old chairs replaced the simple wicker ones we had begun with until, in the end, our little house grew quite charming.

I have always clung to those early pieces of furniture; they have become a part of me, and I have never failed to carry them with me to all the different houses and apartments I have lived in since I bought them. There is a certain square table, Louis XV, with a beautiful line in its legs and little round corners to the top, that I should just as soon think of parting with as with my dog. This table has been my constant companion for twenty years and more. When Matilda returned to New York, taking her share of the furniture with her, I am sure that I should never have survived the blow if she had claimed that table. Even now, when she comes to see me in Paris and looks at the precious object, I immediately begin to grow nervous. It was the first antique we bought and as we bought it together she naturally must feel a share of ownership in it.

Furniture, real furniture, seems to me to be a part of one's personality and one's life. I always marvel at those people who go into a shop, any shop, and buy *sets* of furniture. One should accumulate one's furniture as one accumulates one's wrinkles. Places do not

## FINDING MYSELF

hold me so much; but furniture, my furniture, goes traveling about with me on all occasions. I know I couldn't write a line—at least not a good one—unless I was sitting at my own desk; and so far as eating a meal in my own house on a new and unfamiliar table, nothing could possibly be more unsympathetic.

We celebrated the first evening in our little Paris home with more color than we had intended, because of Parot's exuberance at finding herself once more in her native city. When we went down to the dining-room there were no signs of dinner; and when we penetrated to the kitchen there were still fewer evidences of anything to eat. However, we did find Parot, overstimulated with red wine, vigorously painting the kitchen walls with a mixture of olive oil and vinegar and mustard. I suppose she thought she was serving the millions of her Gallic brethren with a salad dressing that had been accumulating in strength and quantity during all those wasted years in New York. Our house-warming became entirely too hot for us and we departed to a near-by restaurant, leaving Parot to work off her enthusiasm on the kitchen walls.

The life we led in that little house would have been a great comfort to those nervous mothers who think, when their daughters have gone to Paris to study art, that they have gone straight to the devil. It might almost have been called humdrum—made up, as it was, entirely of routine and hard work. Matilda went off in the morning and spent the day painting and I re-

## MODELING MY LIFE

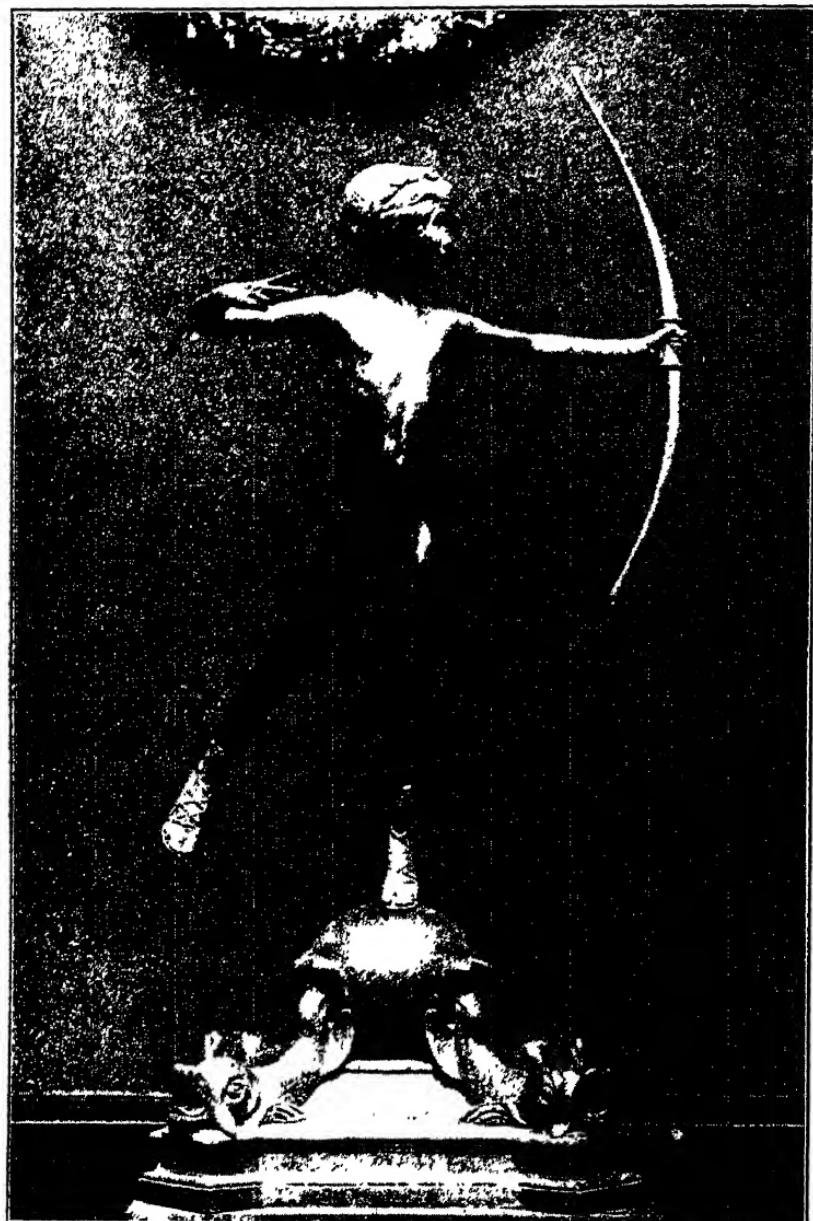
mained in the studio on the ground floor; in the evenings after dinner we went to Collarossi's Academy and drew from life for three hours; then back again to gather up energy for the next day. I have always been very thankful for the routine of those three years; and I never would have had it if it had not been for Matilda Brownell. She had been brought up in the atmosphere of a New York family that believed in doing certain things at certain hours, having certain food on certain days and spending Sundays in a way which the most strenuous Puritan would have approved of. Day after day, week after week, went by, lived through with a clocklike regularity, with long solid hours of work and no interruptions. On Sundays, we invariably began the day with going to church, that lovely old church near the Market, St. Eustache, where we killed two birds with one stone by witnessing a very picturesque service and listening to a sermon in French which did the double duty of giving us some very good advice and teaching our ears to become accustomed to the sound of perfect French. The music was also an inspiration, especially the recessional, which were played by a famous organist who usually chose Beethoven or Bach fugues. After church we would spend an hour or two at the Louvre, storing up inspiration from the wonderful paintings and superb sculpture. Then came lunch in one of our favorite restaurants in the Palais Royal—for Sunday was a day on which it was necessary to give Parot complete liberty to work off Latin temperament, in order



*Photo A. B. Bogart, New York*

**FIGHTING BOYS**

At Art Institute, Chicago, Illinois.



*Photo A. B. Bogart, New York*

### YOUNG DIANA

This, with a tall base of four greyhounds, on estate of Harold Pratt, Glen Cove, Long Island. Also one loaned to Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

## FINDING MYSELF

to regain efficient calm for the coming week. During the afternoon, if the weather were fine, we would take a boat down the Seine, get off at St. Cloud and walk through the forest until we were forced to leave by the insistent beating of the drum which meant the closing hour had come. And the day ended with dinner at a little cocher restaurant just outside the gates—after which we took the boat back home.

I am sure this program does not sound as if it were dangerous to either health or morals; and I don't think ours was a unique routine. There were lots of young American students in Paris at that time leading just as frugal and sane lives. Of course there were exceptions; there always are; and unfortunately they are the cases that are most heard about.

I have given this slight outline of those three years as I consider them almost the most important in my career as an artist. It was during that time that I found myself. Every artist, sooner or later, has to go through a period of finding himself; he has to do it before any one else can find him; and the sooner this period comes the better, as it then furnishes a long time in which to do the work he has decided he can do best—the sort that will express him, his personality, his individuality and give him a small or great right to become immortal. This period has nothing to do with what might be called learning the technique of the profession; that should belong to the past, got through with, forgotten; of course it is necessary—you can't do anything without

## MODELING MY LIFE

it; but once learned it must become second nature and, in a way, quite unconscious. I once asked MacMonnies what he thought about a student of sculpture studying anatomy. "Of course it's absolutely necessary," he said. "Every sculptor must study anatomy and then—forget it." It has always seemed to me very much like the rules of grammar; we learn them during our early school days and later they go entirely out of our heads and the grammar has become more or less an instinct. Grammar is in a way the skeleton. Once you learn the skeleton you don't think any more about it; and yet, if you didn't know all about the skeleton, you couldn't possibly do a figure that would be well constructed. A three months' course in anatomy at the beginning of every sculptor's study saves him endless time later on.

The Academy of Art in Cincinnati, the work at the World's Fair in Chicago, my year with MacMonnies in Paris and my two years of struggle in New York were all steps in the process of learning to be a sculptor. By the time I arrived in Paris for the second time I had reached the point where I was beginning to wonder what *kind* of sculpture I was going to do. I knew I could make a living; that was most satisfactorily demonstrated by having made enough money to return to Paris and not be worried for a long time about expenses. But beyond that—what could I do? Did I have a flair for any special branch of sculpture? Did I have ideas of making literature of sculpture, as a woman I knew

## FINDING MYSELF

did—every piece of her work was so cluttered up with symbolism that she had very little strength left, after she had composed her message to the world, to do the modeling? Did I believe that sculpture should teach lessons as those paintings that are supposed to tell stories do? Did I feel that art should be grave or gay —pagan or Christian—spiritual or sensual? But why go on with the endless questions that faced me! I didn't know at all what I wanted to do—and it took me three whole years to find out.

I did know, though, some of the things I did not want to do—and at the head of this list came equestrian statues; and this, too, in spite of a fleeting ambition while in Cincinnati to make this my life work. I think it was that winter in Washington, while I was doing two portrait medallions, when I realized that equestrian statues could come very near to ruining a beautiful city. It seems quite impossible to avoid running bang into one of these monster-pieces everywhere you turn in Washington. Thank Heaven I resisted adding to the number! And I think I deserve credit for being brave enough to refuse to do a portrait statue at a time when I was sadly in need of a commission.

While in Washington a distinguished old senator asked me how I would like to do a portrait statue of Longfellow to be put up in the Capitol. Of course I thrilled at the idea of having a work of mine, an important work, in so conspicuous a place; then came a

## MODELING MY LIFE

dampening of all enthusiasm as I thought of the hundreds of stuffy old bronze gentlemen in Prince Alberts and generals' uniforms already standing in every square of the city.

"It would be a crime to put up another portrait statue in Washington!" I exclaimed impulsively.

"What do you mean?" asked the senator. "We have the money and the site and it is now only a question of finding the sculptor."

I tried to explain my point of view. I asked the senator if he had ever seen the plan for the city which had been made over a century ago by a Frenchman, Major L'Enfant—a plan made at George Washington's special request. I grew enthusiastic over what our capital would be if that plan were finished with its suggested esplanades and magnificent vistas. I went further and said that the completing of that plan would furnish a chance to assemble all the bronze equestrian statues and place them on either side of the great avenue that would lead from the Capitol to the Monument, thus creating a historic pageant. I cited the circle of queens that surrounds the fountains in the Luxembourg gardens as an example. Then I ended by asking the senator if the committee wouldn't consider a fountain to Longfellow's memory, surrounded by flowers and plants and marble benches, a place where people might come at their leisure for a breathing spell, for a moment of rest—all this instead of a bronze figure that one person in a thousand might accidentally glance

## FINDING MYSELF

at, shudder and hurry away from as fast as possible.

"I'd love to do a memorial garden for Longfellow!" I ended with a glow of enthusiasm.

The senator looked at me through slightly offended and surely very critical eyes. "You've got entirely off the track, young lady! What we want is the statue of the MAN."

By this time I was getting tired of not having even my point of view admitted and became impatient.

"Well—I won't do it!" I burst out. "I won't add to this obsession of male egotism that is ruining every city in the United States with rows of hideous statues of men—men—men—each one uglier than the other—standing, sitting, riding horseback—every one of them pompously convinced that he is decorating the landscape!" Then, seeing a mild alarm in the old senator's eyes, I added more calmly: "Of course there are many good portrait statues. The point I am trying to make is that too much of anything is ruinous; and Washington already has too many portrait monuments."

The senator moved away to what he considered a safe distance, fully convinced by this time that he had encountered a particularly dangerous species of suffragette. Years later, when I was sitting beside him at dinner, he turned to me with a delightful twinkle in his eyes and said:

"If I'm not very much mistaken, you are the young lady who was once so violent about statues of men."

I nodded and met his smile. "I still am," I answered.

## MODELING MY LIFE

"I've never yet done a bronze figure of a man in a Prince Albert—and I hope to heaven I never will."

With this decision taken early in my career, I looked about and thought a great deal of what I should make my particular kind of sculpture. Of course, while doing this thinking and searching, I had to go ahead with the commissions I had brought away from New York with me; and for a long time my work consisted entirely of doing monuments for the dead. Sometimes I would become rather alarmed over this; it was so tremendously depressing; I hated the idea of devoting all my time to those who had passed away. But the experience left me with a very deep conviction that the dead are always with us. Surely they were continuously with me during those days; and in a most comforting way, too, for they kept me from worrying about expenses; without them, I might never have had those quiet years in which to find myself.

As soon as we were settled in our little house, I began the memorial of the old gentleman who had founded a college and who was supposed to have looked like Benjamin Franklin. The work went along very well until I reached the inscription. That held me up for a long time, not so much on account of the modeling of the letters—I still had Saint-Gaudens' alphabet with me—but more because I was somewhat bewildered by the statement regarding the gentleman's career. It began: "Born 1840. Began immediately to study Latin." That bothered me very much. I demurred

## FINDING MYSELF

over putting such a sweeping statement in bronze. I felt sure it would create surprise—unless the old gentleman had shown himself at birth to be so extraordinary that nothing he might have done would have been questioned. Still—no one was living to vouch for his precocity. The difficulty was solved by writing to America and receiving permission to leave out the “immediately” and let the age at which he began to study Latin remain shrouded in the past.

Two other monuments for the dead came my way before this first one had been finished—both for Woodlawn Cemetery. Even the very good sums accompanying these commissions did not entirely relieve my mind of a certain ominous suggestion; and just in order to clear the atmosphere of too much mournfulness I took a little excursion into something livelier and did an allegorical figure, entitled “Music,” for the Paris Exposition that was soon to open. Though this had no success—due in great measure, I have always thought, to the fact that my Italian model, after posing for me for several weeks, went off to Italy for a short visit and returned, completely changed by a steady diet of macaroni, with an entirely different figure—it achieved its purpose and sent me back to the designing of my monuments for the dead with much lighter rhythm.

MacMonnies was always of great assistance to me during those days. Though I still called myself his pupil—indeed, I am always his pupil—I worked no longer in his studio; but he would often come to our

## MODELING MY LIFE

house in the late afternoon and criticize my work, always entering with the greeting: "And how are the dead coming on?" Then he would give me a long, useful criticism, after which we sat around the fire for an hour or two talking of art, rarely of people and things—which at that time hardly entered at all into our lives. MacMonnies was an inspiring conversationalist and we were content to keep our house quiet and empty for the visits of the master, of which we were never forewarned.

Once, after one of his long twilight visits, I saw him bundling up several of the silver portrait medallions I had done in New York and brought to Paris with me. When I asked what he was going to do with them he gave some evasive answer and left without satisfying my curiosity. A week later he said casually:

"By the way—those medallions of yours! I showed them to the curator of the Luxembourg Museum. He liked them so much that he wants them for the Museum. Would you mind giving them to the French Government?"

Would I mind having my work in the Musée du Luxembourg—the greatest honor any living artist can have! He might just as well have asked me if I wanted to go to heaven when I died. Nothing could possibly have given me so much inspiring encouragement. Some people insist that an artist can get along without an occasional bouquet; that just working in an artistic direction is enough. I don't agree with such

## FINDING MYSELF

statements. I believe we've got to have encouragement —just as we've got to have food.

There were trips scattered throughout those three years that had a good deal to do with helping me find myself. The first break in the monotony of work came when Matilda Brownell went over to England to join her family. I arranged to meet them there later on, and I found that the dreariness of London in winter, its century-old, blackened buildings, its somber museums and lugubrious Westminster Abbey offered little contrast to my labor for the dead. Arriving on a day when the Brownells were off on an excursion, I had the somewhat uncomfortable experience of finding that my Indiana accent was entirely unintelligible to every one with whom I came in contact. And I had a good deal of difficulty myself in understanding the English language—at least as it was spoken by the servants in that small hotel. At dinner, the situation reached a hopeless impasse when the pompous waiter leaned over my shoulder and said something that sounded like “T-h-k or t-h-n sup, miss.” I hadn’t the slightest idea what he meant, even after he had repeated the phrase or question several times; it was only after we had both given up all effort at trying to understand one another and he had taken the decision into his own hands and brought me a plate of thin, discolored water, that a faint idea of the meaning of his cryptic remark came to me—but it was then too late to countermand the order and have thick soup.

## MODELING MY LIFE

By the time the Brownells arrived, I had decided that I would remain definitely dumb throughout the rest of the visit. It was much simpler to be taken for a deaf mute than some one who spoke an utterly incomprehensible language. "What does the lady say?" had been repeated so often after the simplest remark I might make that I had become completely discouraged. Just to find out whether or not my perfectly good Indiana accent had ameliorated enough to be understood in London, often tempted me to return there—and yet I have put it off for many years. That first visit created no longing to repeat it. I carried away an impression of a most unfeminine, huge, dreary city—an impression that was accentuated when I was once more safely back in the suavity and softness of Paris, where every one is always gay and amiable and understanding, in spite of the fact that my French may also be slightly colored by a middle-western burr.

In London I felt like an atom of soot; in Paris, by comparison, I always felt like a beam of sunlight—even when working for the dead—even, also, while attending a funeral, which I did while working on those monuments for Woodlawn. I admit that doing such a thing at such a moment sounds entirely appropriate, but it was sympathy and not morbid curiosity that carried me to the funeral. A man I had known in MacMonnies' studio committed suicide and we all turned out in full force to pay him our last respects, though the whole funeral proceedings were so dramatic and

## FINDING MYSELF

picturesque that none of us could feel very sad about it. Everything was done in such a decorative manner, with such precision; and each one of us seemed in a way to have a special part to play in this last drama. After a very short service in the church, we all filed up the aisle, threw holy water on the coffin and shook hands with each member of the family; then we walked behind the hearse to the cemetery, where the same procedure was repeated, the sprinkling of holy water and shaking of hands; then the coffin was placed in the family vault. This custom of placing the dead in a tomb beside his kindred struck me as being sympathetic and such a comforting contrast to our appalling habit of lowering the coffin into the ground and throwing clods of earth upon it. We left the cemetery with an intimate friend of the artist and returned to his house, where we were served Gruyère cheese and Madeira wine and spent the rest of the day saying all the nice things we could think of about our dead friend and really rather enjoying his party.

The next trip, on a bicycle through Touraine, was much more useful to me than my wanderings through London fog. Its success was due principally to a friend I made during those days, Anne Archbold, who, besides being attractive, had the healthy, normal, sports-woman's disregard—perhaps contempt—for everything connected with art. It is most useful and necessary for artists to have other than artistic friends. We are very apt to grow into the habit of thinking our profession is

## MODELING MY LIFE

the only one worth considering and forget that other things are equally necessary to keep the world jogging along. Anne Archbold was just the sort of person to get my thoughts off my work and thrust me, with no subtle changes, into the world of gaiety and pleasure. She always cleared the atmosphere when she arrived at our little house and soon cleared the house, too, of all its inmates by carrying them off somewhere else. Eventually, she fell somewhat under the influence of my own concentration upon art, and let me interest her a bit in my world, an interest which reached climax several years later when we embarked upon the building of her Italian villa at Bar Harbor.

My friend had broken in upon a long succession of weeks of uninterrupted work by carrying me off on that trip to the famous French châteaux; and it only took me a day or two to find out that her intention was not to do sight-seeing, but just to get into the country, bicycle all day and spend the nights in wayside inns—a thoroughly wholesome and delightful idea. She gave in to what she called my whims the first day and followed me conscientiously through the first château we came to—Blois, I think it was—but after that she always remained outside while I entered and wandered through the mazes of rooms of every castle I saw.

“I’ve seen one,” she replied to my protests. “All the rest are exactly like it. So far as I’m concerned, the principal object of these châteaux is to cast shade in which a tired bicyclist can rest.”

## FINDING MYSELF

Before I began work on the cinerary urn, I decided that it was absolutely necessary for me to go to Italy and see some Greek tombs.

“Greek tombs!” some one exclaimed. “Why go to Italy? The Louvre is filled with them.”

But Italy was calling me and I grasped at any excuse. It was calling Matilda, too, and though she had been there several times with her family she grew enthusiastic over the idea of personally conducting some one—and especially a sculptor—who had never seen Italy.

The trip was robbed of perfection by the discovery that Italy is just as cold in winter as any other place—perhaps even colder; all those fifteenth-century palaces must have been built when the climate was much milder than it is to-day. Even the assertion that people wore fur-lined robes, used several braziers in each room and never opened a window does not convince me that the climate hasn’t changed materially.

I began sniffling as soon as I had spent an hour in the Milan cathedral; I continued sniffling when I stood before the Colleoni statue in Venice and almost changed my mind about equestrian statues; and by the time I had shivered for hours before the tombs of the Medicis in Florence, I was well on the way towards fatal influenza. Some one in the pension suggested that I drink hot cognac steadily and thus cure a cold that was becoming as objectionable to others as to myself; and accepting this advice, I went out and bought a large

## MODELING MY LIFE

bottle of the believed-to-be curative liquor. Returning to the pension with the intention of spending the rest of the day in bed with a hot water bottle and frequent hot toddies, I happened to pass the Bargello and suddenly remembered I had not yet seen anything of Donatello's. Judging from the way I felt at that moment, I decided this would be my last chance to look at any sort of sculpture. I gathered together my rapidly failing forces, struggled up the famous staircase and at last reached the bas-reliefs of the singing boys. Suddenly I experienced a tremendous thrill. I forgot I was in a dying condition, I forgot I held the bottle of cognac in my hand, I forgot everything but the amazing realization that I had found the sort of sculpture that appealed to me in a way nothing else had ever done. But my exaltation was short-lived. It was completely dispelled by a furious guard who came up, spoke to me in a far from reassuring way and pointed accusingly at the broken bottle on the stone floor and the compromising streams of cognac which by this time were filling the whole room with strong fumes.

I always look back on that incident as being my first libation to Donatello and to the inspiration that later pointed out my way to me. And the second libation—if I had had any cognac left—would have been poured before Verrocchio's Boy and Fish which I discovered a day or two later in the Palazzo Vecchio. Somehow, the work of these two artists seemed to me to be exactly what I had been waiting for; they explained to me in

## FINDING MYSELF

a flash why I had so long felt a horror and aversion to bronze gentlemen in Prince Alberts.

I knew now what I wanted to do; and a visit the next week to the Naples Museum and to Pompeii settled the matter. The Pompeians understood perfectly the real personal use of sculpture. Their houses were built round a bronze statuette and the house was given its name from the name of that statuette—the House of Narcissus, the House of the Faun, etc. I filled my brain and my sketch book to overflowing with all those gay pagan figures and then and there decided never to do stupid, solemn, self-righteous sculpture—even if I had to die in a poorhouse. My work should please and amuse the world. Banish the thought that I should ever try to teach any one anything! My work was going to decorate spots, make people feel cheerful and gay—nothing more!

But, alas—I had that cinerary urn awaiting me in Paris! It weighed on my chest even while those delightful bronzes in Naples were dancing in and out about me. I had to get it finished; and the sooner it was finished and out of the way the sooner the field would be cleared for pagan sculpture. But even when I was once more at work on it I wasn't very solemn; I hummed gay little tunes; and the urn itself soon began to reflect my happiness and turned out to be a rather cheerful sort of an affair—which I don't think, after all, has done any harm to Woodlawn Cemetery.

But wait!—I had almost forgotten something else

## MODELING MY LIFE

that came into my life at the same time as the inspiration to do gay instead of solemn things; something that has done its part, too, in making life more agreeable. We had left Pompeii to go over to Sorrento, and broke down on the road in a pouring rain. Castellamare was the nearest town that offered shelter; and once safely there it was apparent that there was nothing else to do but spend the whole day in a dreary hotel—and this in spite of the fact that it is almost the only place in that beautiful land that literally has no charm. From the windows we looked out on a rain-drenched Bay of Naples that might just as well have been a view of Jersey City. I was in despair—for every day lost seemed a tragedy. We had nothing with us to read but guidebooks, and we had read them so conscientiously that we could repeat them by heart. No one could suggest anything. It was one of the few times that I have wished I knew how to sew or knit or crochet or do some of those things with which most women get through dull hours. Finally I sat down before Matilda and exclaimed: "What do you suppose a man would do on a day like this?"

She thought this over much more seriously than I had expected and at last came out with: "I suppose a man would buy all the daily papers to be found and a box of cigars—and then sit down comfortably and read and smoke the hours away."

I rose with alacrity, crossed the deserted hotel lobby, went out into the rain and to the nearest tobacco shop

## FINDING MYSELF

where I had noticed some French magazines and novels displayed in the window. I bought a dozen of each and then began looking at the little glass case that contained cigars and cigarettes. With a gesture that the shopkeeper had no idea was desperate I pointed to the cigarettes and held up ten fingers. Without comment he handed me ten packages and a box of matches. I was pretty well soaked when I got back to the hotel, but I didn't bother about changing clothes or shoes—I was too intent upon starting out to get through that day as a man would. I found the most comfortable chair in the hotel, scattered the magazines and books about me, sat down and crossed my legs, opened a package of cigarettes, chose one, lighted it and began to smoke. I smoked all that day and have smoked the greater part of every day since.

I have never lectured on any subject—except during the war when every one suddenly burst forth with forensic eloquence; in fact making a speech is just as much agony to me to-day as it was when I was forced to read an essay on Utopia before the concentrated mass of Terre Haute parents; but as soon as the agitation against smoking becomes dangerous I am going to take to the platform and tour the whole of the United States. It is the most soothing habit one can possibly acquire; it helps one over very serious problems; it develops inspiration; and most of all it quiets nerves that might otherwise become trying to one's neighbors.

In those days, the Latin Quarter was full of models

## MODELING MY LIFE

and, as soon as it was known that the little house on the corner of Boulevard Raspail and Rue Boissonade was occupied by artists, our doorbell was almost steadily tinkling. All I had to do, when I wanted a model, was to sit at the window and look over those who came by the dozens. They were in great part Italian, though there was practically every nation under the sun represented. I have always been glad that I got to know some of them so well, for many of them contradicted all the absurd ideas that the public in general have about models being fantastic creatures without any morals or education. Up to that time my experience in working from life had been quite limited—at least in my own studio; and when models were mentioned I naturally thought of Lily White and her determination to shock me away from MacMonnies' atelier. But there was one whom I got to know very well; indeed, we are still great friends. Eleonora de Palme is her name, a handsome, sedate, dignified woman who made her living by posing for life classes and in studios. She showed herself on many occasions to be a good friend and assistant to stranded art students in the Quarter. Her acts of kindness were without number; and her unselfishness became a byword in that world that is made up so much of casual good-fellowship. I have known her often to pass on to some friend or acquaintance a job for posing, just because the other woman needed it more than she did; she posed for months for hard-up artists who were unable to pay her anything:

## FINDING MYSELF

and whenever she heard of any one being ill or in need of attention she would turn herself into a most efficient trained nurse in the twinkling of an eye. Throughout the war she was superb, devoting all her time to cheering up the morale of her friends and acquaintances in the Quarter—one of those acts that receive so little attention or appreciation as they are entirely without any picturesque element.

During that terribly long, bitterly cold winter of 1917-18 I was working on a statue of *La France* and was very anxious all the time about the clay freezing before the work could be finished. If clay freezes it of course becomes perfectly hard and when it thaws it is nothing but useless mud. *Eleonora* was posing for the statue and understood the risk of my work being ruined at any moment if we could not get enough coal to keep the studio warm. Each day, before coming to me, she would stand in line for hours in order to buy one of the tiny sacks of coal that were being doled out; she would always come in cheerfully with the sack under her arm and the exclamation that "*La France*"—my statue—would not freeze that day. Once, when she had been standing in line an interminably long time and was told, when her turn came, that there was no coal left, she insisted that some must be found in order to save "*La France*."

"Save *La France*! What do you mean?"

"A statue—made by an American—to show the world what we are doing!"

## MODELING MY LIFE

The crowd about her heard the explanation, gave a cry of "Vive l'Amérique!" and the man behind the window quickly handed out a small sack of coal.

Eleonora de Palme was not unique. There are many others like her. And so far as the profession of posing being an easy one, any one who believes that should try sitting in one position without moving for an hour; he will soon come to the conclusion that he would rather do hard work—especially when he considers the small price paid to models, who, in those days, received only five or six francs for a sitting of four hours.

Still working on that cinerary urn and thinking of the joyousness of Donatello and Verrocchio, I used to stop often in the street before Collarossi's Academy and find myself surrounded by fifty or more little children, ranging from one year up, who immediately set up a howl to be employed as models. They had been trained from the moment they could stand on their feet for a profession that helped out the family fortunes. I often gave them pennies and looked at them longingly; in spite of their poverty and their fantastic rags, they had all the gaiety and fun and joy of living that I was growing more and more keen about reproducing.

These little tots knew they appealed to me and when they found out where I lived came in hordes to my door and had great fun with the bell, making Parot furious—though they invariably assumed most serious faces and asked if a model was wanted when the door

## FINDING MYSELF

was opened. They got so troublesome that I had to tell Parot to chase them all away—which of course she knew how to do perfectly. But one day even her heart was touched by one of them and, opening the door noiselessly to my studio, she thrust a little boy of four into the room. He stood there timidly, looking at me through anxious, pleading eyes, dressed in the most absurd little uniform of a Paris coachman—red waistcoat, blue coat and trousers and white top hat. He was so cunning and so appealing that I didn't know whether I wanted to laugh or be sad. In the end I smiled at him and called him to me. His little face lit up with an extraordinarily happy expression and he ran to me with outstretched arms—sure at last that I was going to let him pose for me. How little I knew at that moment that he was Fate in disguise—rushing straight into my arms!

“What am I going to do with him?” I asked Parot, who still stood at the door, smiling and waiting to see if I were going to order her to take him away.

“Let him pose for you, mademoiselle!”

“But—I’m working on a monument for the dead.”

Parot’s Gallic shoulders rose with exasperation. “Mon Dieu—mademoiselle! It is time to forget the dead! We will all soon enough be among them! Do something living!”

Without another word, I motioned her to come into the room; and we undressed the little boy. Then,

## MODELING MY LIFE

quite nude, he grabbed the sandwich which Parot had thrust into his hand and began dancing about, chuckling delightedly to himself all the time.

In that moment a finished work flashed before me. I saw a little boy dancing, laughing, chuckling all to himself while a spray of water dashed over him. The idea of my Frog Fountain was born. It was only necessary now to get to work and make it reality, thanks to Parot. If she hadn't been attracted by that little boy and poked him into my studio, I might have gone on for ages working away at that cinerary urn.

"What do you think of it?" I asked MacMonnies when the bronze cast had been brought back to my studio.

I waited for his criticism—not impatiently and really not anxiously, for even though unfavorable criticism on his part would have been an awful blow, I knew that my work had pleased me more than anything I had ever done. Of course I wanted his praise, wanted it tremendously, but if he hadn't given it to me, I shouldn't have been discouraged.

"It's amusing!" he said at last. "Awfully amusing!"

"That's what I meant it to be. That is what my work is going to be from now on."

He smiled approval. "What are you going to do with it?"

"Take it to New York—and start out on my career of designing fountains for gardens—for courtyards—for terraces."

## FINDING MYSELF

"Perhaps that's a good idea," he said reflectively. "At least it's worth trying. If you make good in New York you won't have to worry about anything else. I believe you have struck a good note and that your difficulties are over with."

Yes—I felt the same way—that my difficulties were over with and that, in finding myself, in realizing what I wanted to do, Fortune was going to beam on me from then on. Alas—for such moments of confidence! One has to pay for them very bitterly.

## VI

### THE FROG FOUNTAIN

My second arrival in New York was as different from the first as day is from night; it really had some of the elements of a triumphal entry—without the triumph. I was met by my friend, Anne Archbold, deposited in a gleaming limousine and whisked off to a handsome house on Park Avenue before I was perfectly sure that I had landed. And yet, all the time that I was experiencing the comfort of being met by friends and surrounded by warm hospitality, my thoughts kept turning back to that first arrival when I made my way alone—with only twenty-eight dollars in my pocket—to a home for working women, who were not taken in unless they were well armed with letters of introduction. The contrast was sharp, though there was a certain similarity that robbed the cordial welcome of some of its perfection. As a matter of fact I had very little more money that second time than I had had the first. Three years in Paris and trips about the Continent had left very little of what I had gained from those monuments for the dead. The need of work and commissions was a fact that stared me in the face and made me rather restless amid so much luxury. A beautiful house and motors and servants were all very well in

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

their way; I enjoyed them immensely; but they were not mine and I felt all the time I was enjoying them that they were—at least for me—a sort of disintegrating influence. By dinner-time I had fully made up my mind to run away from it all and get more into my own setting.

When I made the announcement of this decision loud protests went up from the family. What was the matter? Didn't I like them? Wasn't I comfortable? Couldn't I stand spending a few days with them? They insisted that I needed time and rest before looking about; there was no reason for such great hurry—so far as they could see.

“But you don't seem to understand that I am a working woman with a living to make. I should be utterly ruined if I stopped on here surrounded by all this luxury. The longer I remain the harder it will be for me to take up the simple life again.”

Mr. Archbold listened attentively and then smiled. “I've decided you are not going to take up the simple life—as you call it—for at least six months. I have made other plans for you. You are going to Japan and China with my daughter. All the tickets have been bought and reservations made and you both leave in about a fortnight.”

I shook my head firmly. “You are the kindest people in the world. But going off on a trip like that at this moment is out of the question. Just before leaving Paris I received a letter from Indiana offering me a

## MODELING MY LIFE

commission to do a portrait bust and pedestal of one of our state heroes. I accepted it and must begin work at once."

The arguments lasted all through the evening; but I was just as decided at the end as at the beginning. The trip really didn't tempt me in the least—which made it much easier to refuse to go. My great desire at that moment was to settle down in New York and get to work; anything that interfered with this plan bothered me.

I soon found out that there was a deep-laid plot to persuade me against my better judgment. MacMonnies was in New York at the time and the question was put to him and his influence requested. When I met him a few days later he said I was making a great mistake not to take advantage of such a trip, that the art of the East would no doubt be of great benefit in formulating my taste and that I would come back with a new vision.

"But—I have a commission to do a portrait of an Indiana hero!" I exclaimed anxiously.

"Let the Indiana hero wait. Go and make the acquaintance of the heroes of the Orient."

"They don't interest me in the least. I'm perfectly sure they will bore me to death. I want to get a studio here in New York, unpack my things, show my Frog Fountain and go seriously to work."

"All of which you can do six months from now just as well as to-day."

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

"My Indiana hero!" I wailed, feeling all my defenses crumbling.

"What did he do? What's his name?"

"I don't know what he did," I answered, weakening. "His widow wrote me he was the greatest man our state had ever produced and that she wanted to make him immortal in native granite."

So much concentrated determination on the part of my friends finally won the day; and in two weeks I felt myself swept completely off my feet and rushing as fast as I could go across the continent on the way to Japan and China. The sensation was exactly that of a sleepwalker who is being pushed in different directions against his will. Of course the trip was wonderful, Japan interesting and China marvelous. We traveled like little princesses in a fairy tale, for Standard Oil officials met us at each port and arranged everything so that we lost no time in seeing much more than the average tourist ever runs across.

But all the time I knew perfectly well that I was off the track and that this sort of padded existence was not mine—and very likely never would be—and that it was delaying my career. Also, it was going to make it all the harder to get back into the old traces. When the question of going on to India was discussed, I deliberately balked; when we got back to California and it was planned to stop on there for several weeks in that lotus-eating sunshine, I balked again. Six months had already gone by and my fight for a career was being

## MODELING MY LIFE

put off every day. On the whole I must have been a most unsatisfactory traveling companion.

"I must return to New York," I finally broke out. "I want to be a sculptor—not a little sister of the rich. All this luxury is ruining me."

It amuses me now to think how I was pursued by the furies throughout that whole trip. I really didn't enjoy it at all; and I don't think I got much in the way of inspiration out of it. Of course there are many pieces of wonderful sculpture in Japan—especially in the museum at Kyoto, where there is a collection of wooden figures that seemed almost to have had an influence from the Greeks centuries before—but they were so far away from the subjects that I had decided to make my own that I felt little interest in them. There are many worlds and centuries between thousand-handed Buddhas and four-faced gods and gay fountains with bronze children playing about under sprays of water.

So back into the whirlpool of New York I went, and into a studio that I had signed a lease for before I left. It was on the top floor of an office building on 21st Street that had been completed while I was away and which I had taken from plans on paper in the architect's office—a fatal thing to do. I knew the moment I climbed the endless, bare, cement-smelling steps that I was not going to like the place; and once within the freshly painted mustard-colored walls of the huge room I realized it was going to be the most unsympathetic abode I had ever lived in. However, I had signed the

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

lease for a year and was in for it. The Archbolds, who were just then doing over their town house, sent me some furniture they were discarding and I went to work to get things in order, making of the large bare room a studio and living quarters.

The first night I slept there, my depression was increased by the arrival of a letter informing me that the commission for the Indiana hero had been given to some one else while I was wandering round the world. The widow had evidently grown restless over the delay in perpetuating her husband in native granite. Something had told me all along that if I went away I would lose the chance of doing that state hero. Yes—the trip had been a mistake; in fact, in my mood of that night I felt sure everything was going wrong. There I was on the top floor of a deserted office building—it seems I was the only one except the janitor who remained there during the night—looking down on one of those empty side streets of the great city and feeling desperately blue, the commission I had counted on to give me a start gone, practically no money left and nothing in prospect. ~~I~~ I didn't try to blame it all on some one else; I was quite willing to accept the whole responsibility; I had gone off on a joy ride instead of buckling down to work and this sort of a dreary situation was just what I deserved.

I got into bed with the same sad feeling that I used to have when I had spent a silent, miserable evening in Union Square, from which I returned to the frugal

## MODELING MY LIFE

meal of those days—baked beans and a bottle of milk. Was I to go through that same sort of experience again! Was the road of art always to be uphill—at least for me! I tossed and tossed, grew more and more dreary and finally dozed off to be awakened abruptly by the sound of heavy footsteps on the stairs of the deserted building. I sat up and listened. As the first floor was apparently reached, the footsteps slowed up and then I heard the sound of a heavy fist knocking on doors. There seemed to be a knock on the first door, then the second and so on down the entire row of office doors. Then the steps leading to the second floor were ascended and knocks repeated as before. Each time a floor was passed and the steps sounded nearer and nearer, the more alarmed I became. The sounds reverberated harshly in the empty building and echoed in an appalling way. It was exactly like the angel Gabriel—or whoever it is—coming steadily nearer and nearer to announce to me alone the imminent doomsday. At first I wondered if it might not be my imagination, brought on by so much depression; then the repetition of the sound was so regular that I began to think it was only mechanical and not human; finally I was ready to accept any explanation—ghosts, burglars, secret service men, ghouls, anything. At any rate, my turn was drawing nearer and nearer; and in expectation of some horrible end I drew the bed-clothes over my head and lay there as speechless and stiff as if the end had come several hours before.

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

At last the steps stopped before my door and there was a sharp rap. I peered out from under the sheet and saw through the ground glass of the door the silhouette of a policeman with a raised club. Strangely enough, I thought of the Indiana hero in that moment of terror. He had come to chide me—perhaps punish me—for running off on a trip and neglecting him for so many months. But why should he be wearing a policeman's headgear? Was it in that profession that he had distinguished himself? Curiosity got the best of me and I gathered up enough courage to speak.

"What do you want?" I managed to ask, my throat now like a piece of old leather.

There was a moment of silence; then a deep voice replied: "You left the front door on the street open."

Relief made me absolutely lifeless for a few moments; then I replied: "I didn't. I've got nothing to do with the front door. There's a colored janitor who sleeps in the basement."

"He's not there. You're the only person in this building. You've got to come down and lock the door after me when I go out."

"And come up all those steps in this deserted building alone! Of course I won't do such a thing! I couldn't! I'm too scared now even to get out of bed. I couldn't stand on my feet."

"Then that door'll be left open all night."

"I don't care—just so this one is closed."

He went away grumbling something extremely un-

## MODELING MY LIFE

complimentary about women and I listened to his heavy tread growing fainter and fainter. When there was a distant sound of a slamming door I sat up, finally gathered together enough strength to get out of bed, lighted the room fully and then dressed. I thought it much better to be prepared to receive any more callers that might come through that unlocked street door. But none came; and after a hundred years or more the dawn finally sifted into the room.

Anne Archbold came in during the morning to find out how I had got through that first night alone in an office building and when she found me in a completely shattered condition, she would listen to no opposition on my part to going home with her that afternoon—the Archbolds were then at their summer place on the Hudson—and returning the next morning with her father, who came to town early each day on his yacht. Once more I yielded to temptation—under the circumstances I don't think I should be blamed too much for this fall—and spent the next two months in the country, coming to town each morning on a yacht, working all day and returning in the evening in the same grand style. Once more I had slipped back into being a little sister of the rich; and though the summer passed most delightfully, I chafed very much under the realization that I was again on the wrong track. But for the moment there seemed nothing else to do.

I unpacked all the things I had had shipped from Paris, things I had done while there, and of course the

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

Frog Fountain was given the place of honor. My friends who came to the studio admired it immensely, which was encouraging in its way, but no one bought it and no one who could help me sell it had come to my studio. I clung with fatalistic belief to the idea that this piece of work was going to get me started on the road to fame; I never wavered in this belief; but during those long summer months of waiting fame seemed to grow more and more distant.

At this time Stanford White was at the zenith of his success. He had built Madison Square Garden and crowned it with Saint-Gaudens' Diana; he had made his designs for the Pennsylvania Station and got that under headway; but what interested me more than anything else he had done were the country houses he was building about New York. Everything he had done and was doing appealed to me more than the work of any other architect; and yet it seemed my fate not to meet him in New York for a long, long time. I had often seen him in MacMonnies' studio in Paris when, together, they were working on a model of an arch some one had put up at the entrance to Prospect Park in Brooklyn and which had proved to be a dismal failure. I had often watched them at work before the small model of this arch, studying its defects and planning to change and improve the effect by the application of groups of sculpture; but as I was only an assistant in the studio I had no chance to come into more than the most casual association with these two master artists. But I had

## MODELING MY LIFE

remembered Stanford White distinctly from those days. He was one of the biggest men I had ever seen, tall, broad, with a red face and a mop of red hair that stood straight up from his forehead. His quick, nervous gestures, his assurance in knowing what was right and what was wrong, and his almost infallible taste made a very lasting impression on me. Some one had described him as having the wind back of him—which always seemed to me a perfect description. You couldn't help feeling that he was a tremendous vital force going entirely—sweeping ahead—in the direction of creating beautiful things. The stories told of his adventures in art were inspiring and fired the imagination. One of these stories told how he had gone to Italy and hired a large sailing boat which he kept anchored at Leghorn while he traveled all over Italy buying everything that appealed to him—frescoes, entire ceilings and wood-work of rooms, mantelpieces, odd bits of marble, paintings, stuffs, brocades, Genoese velvets, everything and anything that would make the houses he was designing for America more beautiful—and when the boat was crammed to overflowing and could hold nothing more, he got on it, weighed anchor and sailed off home with the precious cargo—a sort of modern Ulysses returning with the treasures of Troy. He was undoubtedly a picturesque figure—a condottiere of medieval days adventuring in art.

I went on hoping all the time that I might meet Stanford White again and have an opportunity of ask-

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

ing him to come to my studio and look at my work; but this seemed never to come about. At last, giving up all hope, I finally asked permission of the Emmetts—friends I had made in Paris—to place my Frog Fountain in their studio for a few weeks. Bay Emmett was then famous for her portraits of millionaires and senators and a great number of people were passing in and out of her studio all the time. I thought my fountain might attract more attention there than in my own studio; but though I waited anxiously for encouraging reports only words of praise came my way. No order for it was forthcoming—no orders for anything—and my funds had now quite definitely reached the vanishing point. I saw the same old New York of the past surging up and getting hold of me again; I even saw a steady diet of baked beans and milk coming nearer and nearer. Of course the situation couldn't be as bad as it was before because I now had friends who would come to the rescue at the first cry for help and who were always about to protect me from loneliness. But I didn't want to cry for help. I never had—and I never would. I could make a living some way; I had done it before; but I wanted to make it in the way I had chosen, and hung on desperately to an ideal.

I very probably bored the Emmetts to distraction with my constant enquiries about the Frog Fountain, who had seen it, what had been said about it, etc., etc. Yet they never showed impatience and were always most encouraging. Sometimes I almost began to feel that my

## MODELING MY LIFE

faith in that little boy was a curse. I couldn't help thinking of him all the time and wondering when he was going to bring me the help I now so urgently needed.

One day I sat down and wrote a letter to Stanford White. I told him I had had the pleasure of meeting him in MacMonnies' studio in Paris—that threadbare form of beginning such a letter; then I went on to say that I had come to New York to get something to do in the way of sculpture, that my studio was only a few blocks from his office and that I would appreciate it very much if he would come and see the things I had with me.

I didn't have to wait very long for his reply. As a matter of fact it came the very next day, a short and curt reply, in which he said that he was far too busy a man to go round visiting studios, that he was rushed to death, had a thousand calls in every direction and hadn't a free moment.

This indifference hurt me very deeply and then made me furious. I worked up a very strong case against Mr. White and wrote it out to him in a letter I sent off in reply to his. I told him I didn't think my request was nearly so extraordinary as he had found it; and that furthermore I did not think the most important architect in New York had the moral right to refuse to investigate the work of young sculptors about him—no matter how busy he might be. It was a relief when I finished this letter, read it over, sealed it and sent it off.

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

Of course I got no reply to it; I didn't expect one; and more than that I felt that I had definitely wiped out any further chances of ever interesting Stanford White in my work.

A month later I was trying to cross Forty-second Street at that congested hour between noon and one o'clock. Receiving a signal from the policeman to make a dash, I hurried out into the middle of the street and crashed straight into a very large man coming my way. After the first sensation of concussion had passed I looked up and found myself staring at a very red, vexed face that was in some way familiar to me. I continued to stare, trying all the time to recall who it was, and finally heard my name spoken.

"Oh—you are Miss Scudder!"

I nodded and suddenly remembered. "Yes—Mr. White," I answered a bit breathlessly.

At this point in the adventure the policeman called to us to move on and explained that the middle of Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue had not yet been arranged for lengthy conversations. Stanford White smiled indulgently at the master of traffic and then turned back to me.

"I saw that little figure of yours the other day in the Emmetts' studio. What do you call it?"

"Frog Fountain," I murmured.

"I like it. How much do you want for it?"

Again the policeman interrupted, this time with raised club; but it would have taken the whole force and all

## MODELING MY LIFE

the clubs in New York to make me budge at that moment; besides, I was talking to a man much bigger than the one who was trying to make us get out of the way.

"A thousand dollars," I answered with a calm that took so much nervous energy to produce that I was a wreck for days afterwards.

"All right," said Stanford White. "I'll take it. Send it to my office. Good-by."

He disappeared in the crowd and I barely escaped being crushed at that crucial moment of my career by a Fifth Avenue bus.

You may be sure I lost no time in getting my Frog Fountain out of the Emmetts' studio and into Mr. White's office. I even went to the extravagance of hiring a hansom cab—how I regret their disappearance!—and carried it there myself that same afternoon and waited an interminably long time for him to appear. In the end I had to leave without seeing him; but the next morning a check for one thousand dollars was in the post.

If I were making a diagram of my career with marks to indicate the most important points—milestones—I should certainly indicate in red letters the day on which Stanford White bought my Frog Fountain. In order to appreciate how important this was to a young sculptor you must know that at that time he was the one man every one was seeking, demanding, imploring to build not only magnificent edifices and churches and public buildings but elaborate country houses as well.

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

He was being sought all over the United States by those who wanted to build something exceptionally beautiful and cared nothing for the expense involved. To have him buy my first really important piece of work meant much more to me than I even realized myself. It was months later that the effect of this purchase began to loom up as the dominating factor in my career.

It is really wonderful what a difference in one's outlook on the world a thousand dollars can make. With that check in hand I immediately gave up that horribly unsympathetic office-building-imitation-studio and moved into one I had been looking at with longing eyes for some time—the Gibson Studios on Thirty-third Street. It was a ramshackle old building that had been taken over by artists and architects who wanted surroundings with more atmosphere than modern, fireproof buildings gave. At that time the Albert Herters, Chester Aldrich, William Welles Bosworth and Robert Reid had studios there—all of whom had spent years in Paris and were trying to reproduce a bit of its charm in New York. I fairly reveled in that old-fashioned house. I had a private staircase that gave on the street so that I was free from all communication with the rest of the house; and the bedroom and bath and most sympathetic, well-lighted studio made up a little suite that suited me perfectly. Of course there were some drawbacks, among them the rats, whose hunger made them very insistent at night, but an equally hungry gray cat soon managed to get them under control; there were

## MODELING MY LIFE

the noise and smell of stables near by; there was the near-by roar of the elevated; and the whole building was a dangerous firetrap—it did burn down soon after I left it—but in spite of what others called impossible defects, I enjoyed every minute of the time spent there.

I often find myself comparing living in that funny old building with the more modern studios I have since had in New York. Those very new sumptuous studio apartments that appear now to be so popular are my pet abomination. All their conveniences—inconveniences, really—their elevators, their steam heat, their push buttons, their dumb-waiters, their telephones, their gas log open fireplaces, their men in livery at the door—these so-called comforts seem to rob them of all atmosphere. I have tried and found it absolutely impossible to do any imaginative or creative work in such places. To begin with, they put an artist too closely in contact with the world; he can never call a single hour his own; and of course any one who has a telephone in his studio might as well give up at once any idea of consecutive work. When I eventually had some success and became more or less the fashion in garden sculpture, my telephone used to ring from nine o'clock in the morning until ten at night. Of course I had to have the wretched thing; if one doesn't bow down before the law of telephoning in New York one might as well become a hermit—for that is exactly what would happen in an age when no one writes notes or calls without making an appointment. And after I had the thing put

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

in, I had to answer it. But my patience was sorely tried when, in the midst of work, a call would come and some one's secretary would ask if it was I and then say: "This is Mrs. So-and-So's secretary speaking. Please hold the wire. Mrs. So-and-So wishes to speak to you." And there I would stand, first on one foot and then on the other, hanging on to the receiver, while Mrs. So-and-So took her bath or had her hair waved or finished her luncheon—losing a good half-hour's work. Finally I used to say to those very busy ladies' secretaries that if Mrs. So-and-So wished to speak to me she would have to come to the telephone and ring for me herself. I sometimes think that people living in New York can put on more lugs and get by with them than any people I have met anywhere else in the world. I don't think I can recall a single instance of being kept waiting on the convenience of some one else in Paris—at least never at the telephone, because perhaps I never use the telephone in Paris!

I had hardly got comfortably settled in that Thirty-third Street studio when a very good commission came my way—a statue of Japanese Art to be placed on the façade of the Brooklyn Museum of Arts and Sciences. It was a twelve-foot statue and I enjoyed doing it very much, especially after my recent trip to the Orient—after all, that trip was not entirely wasted—but the committee appointed to pass on the design became rather troublesome and made frequent visits to my studio to make criticisms and suggestions. Once, when they be-

## MODELING MY LIFE

came particularly insistent in their comments and desired changes, I thought of using the method Corpeaux had employed when he was composing the Flora group for the façade of the Louvre. During each visit of the committee to his studio something dropped from the scaffolding onto some one's head until the entire committee was either in hospital or confined to bed and the sculptor was able to continue his work unmolested. But, on the whole, this was a very cheerful period. I particularly recall delightful parties at the Emmetts' studio in 64, Washington Square, South. The three sisters—Bay, Rosina and Leslie—had been in Paris at the same time with me and our friendship continued when we all began work in New York. They knew every one in and out of society and were constantly entertaining in a most amusing way. Their fancy-dress parties were most amusing. I adore nothing more than dressing up in fantastic costumes. At one of these costume affairs I became enthusiastic enough to get myself up as an Austrian officer, an enthusiasm which lessened as the evening progressed and I found the trousers were so tight that I couldn't sit down and the disguise so perfect that when I started home a cabman called to me in a loud voice: "Cab, sir!"

The National Arts Club was a great comfort to me during those days. It was then on Thirty-fourth Street in an old building, a bit cramped as to space, but home-like and cheerful, where one could get good, simple, cheap food and meet one's fellow workers daily. Later

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

on, when the little club grew ambitious and moved into more pretentious quarters on Gramercy Park and was obliged, in order to meet the increased expenses, to take a quantity of people who had no connection whatever with the fine arts, it lost all its charm—at least for me. Somehow it at once became nondescript—neither Bohemian nor worldly; and cheerless beyond words. The attempt to be smart seemed foolish. Several bell-boys at the door always pounced on me when I appeared and asked if I were a member of the club; and when I went into the restaurant, where I never saw any one I knew, I was immediately confronted again with the question, even before my order was taken: “Are you a member of the club?” Once I got so exasperated that I turned to the woman who was serving me, and said: “You are the sixth person who has asked me that question in the last five minutes. What under the sun is the matter with you?” “Well, miss,” she replied, “we has our orders. Just last week a lady comes here with several friends, orders everything on the bill of fare, eats it and then goes away after signing the check ‘Mrs. Lobster.’ We finds out, after she’s got away, that there’s no such name on the books. You see, miss, the club has to protect itself.” I suppose she was quite right; but the incident decided me to leave the club to those Mrs. Lobsters who might get more pleasure out of it than I did. It had outgrown its usefulness for me.

Bohemian things are attractive; worldly things are

## MODELING MY LIFE

attractive; but there is a wide gulf between the two. Any one who tries to bridge that gulf and mix the gay and careless with the smart and conservative is usually in for a pretty big tumble. To try to form a club on such a basis is absolutely hopeless.

After I resigned from the National Arts Club I joined the Cosmopolitan Club, which one of the members described to me as being the best adapted to the needs of women with professions. I don't believe there is a club in New York of which so many women desire to become members. At any rate I got in hot water with the board of governors by putting up, shortly after I was taken in, the name of a woman whom I had never seen. She was the wife of an artist I had known quite well in Paris. He had just returned to New York, married and wanted his wife to have friends there and the conveniences of club life. Without giving the matter much thought I proposed the aspirant. A few days later one of the committee on membership stopped me in the club.

"Janet Scudder—what's this friend of yours like that you have just put up for membership?"

I mumbled a reply.

"What's the color of her hair?" she went on, insistently.

"The color of her hair?" I repeated. "How should I know!"

She nodded convincingly. "I knew you didn't know that woman. And I just want to know what you mean

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

by putting up the name of a woman you have never seen! Don't you know the Cosmopolitan Club is the most exclusive in New York!"

It certainly was and so many women asked me to propose them as members that I finally resigned from the club to avoid further complication.

Later on I joined the Colony Club, which is one of the best managed in America—and for that matter in the world. I should live permanently in New York if it were possible to have quarters indefinitely in that very comfortable club. One is so absolutely protected from all the ennui of life there; the food is perfect, the service could not possibly be better and the rooms are charming. But it is terrible, after two weeks of bliss—the extreme time allowed one to remain there—to go forth into the cold bleak world again and fend for oneself. Whenever I leave the Colony Club to go out to find an apartment or hotel I feel exactly like Eve going forth out of the garden of Eden.

After that meeting with Stanford White in the middle of Forty-second Street, he disappeared—at least as far as I was concerned—as if he had never existed. I didn't even know for a long time what he had done with my Frog Fountain. Then, out of a clear sky, a letter came one day, signed by him, asking me to call at his office at a certain hour on a certain day. I was there at the hour named—in fact I was there half an hour in advance—and was given a comfortable chair in one of the outer offices. Whoever gave me that com-

## MODELING MY LIFE

fortable chair was a most considerate person and probably knew what I was in for. I waited one hour and a half before there was the least sign of my presence being noticed. Then, one of the doors suddenly burst open and Stanford White rushed into the room, shook my hand vigorously and said:

“Oh, Miss Scudder—I wanted to—”

He got no further, for close on his heels appeared his secretary, who said Chicago was calling him on the telephone. He rushed out and I once more sank back into the comfortable chair.

Another half-hour and he burst into the room again.

“Oh, Miss Scudder—I wanted to—”

Again the secretary on his heels with some murmured words that carried him off without further explanation!

By this time my anxiety and curiosity to know what he really did want were getting the best of me. The comfortable chair was no longer comfortable; I had to leave it and walk about a bit to keep calm. The third time Mr. White appeared, he had his hands full of sketches which he thrust into mine before any one could possibly call him away.

“Designs for two fountains,” he said breathlessly. “Yes—take them along—make sketches for the figures. I’ve indicated about what I want. Yes—yes—you’ll see. Bring them back as soon as you can. Work out your own ideas for them. By the way, I’ve placed your Frog Fountain in the conservatory of the Chapin house and I want you to have another made in marble for Jim

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

Breese's Long Island garden. Better have three more of the bronzes cast. That will make four. Quite enough of them. You don't want them to get too common. Now—about these designs—”

Again that bothersome secretary had appeared and over his shoulder Mr. White called to me: “Bring in the sketches the moment you have them ready. We can talk them over. Good-by.”

I haven't the slightest idea how I got out of that office. If I had fallen out of the window or down the elevator shaft I am perfectly sure I should not have been hurt. They say a drunken man can fall any distance and not be hurt; and I was surely in an intoxicated condition that day—the intoxication of pure joy. My supreme chance had come. I was to collaborate with the greatest architect in America—in fact the greatest architect of the world at that time. No wonder I was dizzy and almost out of my head! I suppose I walked for hours afterwards; I only remember being in continuous motion for a long time; and through it all I kept repeating to myself: “You are made! You are a success! No more canned baked beans—never—never—never! You are on the highroad—right in the middle! But—don't lose your head!”

I made several trips to McKim, Mead and White's offices that winter, taking my small models with me in a hansom cab and carrying them up in the elevator; but my conversations with the great architect were nothing but staccato fragments slipped in between long-distance

## MODELING MY LIFE

telephone calls and consultations. Stanford White's existence was the most hectic any one could possibly have lived; and yet he always knew exactly what he wanted and was able to explain his ideas in a most clear, distinct, and inspiring manner.

During the spring and summer, when I was invited by Mrs. White to their summer home at St. James, I began to see another side of this great man. In the midst of his family, in a delightful house filled with treasures from Spain and Italy, surrounded on all sides by the beautiful, gentle country of the north shore of Long Island, I learned to know him, not as a rushing, business-distracted architect, but as a thoughtful host who was always gay and animated and amusing.

I don't think there has ever been much questioning of the fact that Stanford White was the greatest architect America has ever produced; but lately I have had the feeling that appreciation of him has been diminishing—or at least has become indifferent. Especially have I this feeling when I see the beautiful buildings he designed in New York being ruthlessly torn down to make place for larger and hideous edifices that are being built without any of the feeling for beauty that White put into everything he did. Thank Heaven the Pennsylvania Station will probably be left standing at least during our lifetime! Nothing could be found to show the simplicity and dignity of good taste as this building does; and it is interesting to know that Mr. White designed the main waiting-room from precise measure-

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

ments he had made himself from the interior of the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome, and that the Travertine marble, of which the façade is constructed, was brought all the way from the Roman Campagna. It was details like these that made Stanford White's work so different and so much more beautiful than any one else's. He took infinite pains and endless time and trouble to get some subtle effect that many people would never be aware of until it had been explained to them. But every artist knew at once what his work and its marvelous effects were due to.

After he had counseled me to have only four copies of my Frog Fountain made—advice which I unquestioningly accepted and abided by, even though all four were immediately sold—I had a telegram from him one day asking me to send one of these fountains to his office the next day without fail. I went myself, found him absent and left a note explaining that he had told me to restrict the number to four, that I had done so and that none was left. The following day I got a letter from him saying I had done quite right—though he was awfully sorry not to have one more to put in a club house he was building in New York; and, at any rate, I'd better hurry up and design another fountain figure as quickly as possible.

And then, almost immediately following this conversation, came a letter from the Metropolitan Museum informing me that the committee wished to add some examples of American sculpture to the Museum's ex-

## MODELING MY LIFE

hibits and would like to include my Frog Fountain in the list. My delight over this letter was somewhat dampened by the closing paragraph, in which it was stated that the committee hoped that I would be willing to make a substantial reduction in my price as only a limited amount was available. Another Frog Fountain was cast, with the permission of the original owners of this figure, and sold to that very poor institution for a sum that was less than half the amount the other owners of this bronze had paid for it.

Museums are rather strange and incomprehensible institutions to me. The more I know of them the more difficult they become. I suppose they have to be very careful about taking risks and making decisions and are always open to violent criticisms, especially from those who know nothing about what they are criticizing. I seem to have run the gamut of most of them now. Beginning with the Metropolitan I soon went on to the Congressional Library; then came the Herron Institute of Arts in Indianapolis, the Chicago Art Institute, the Peabody Institute, and so on until recently the Luxembourg Museum in Paris ends the list. And with the museums came those medals which are so much appreciated by all painters and sculptors. My first one came from the World's Fair in Chicago, then followed the St. Louis Exposition, the Buffalo Exposition and the San Francisco Exposition—changing color and developing from copper to silver; at least the diploma which accompanied the San Francisco award carried the in-

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

formation that I could have it silvered at my own expense, which the committee was not able to afford! I valued all these medals tremendously and showed them off with as much pride as the lady with ten sons displays photographs of her children until, a few years ago, a burglar entered my house at Ville d'Avray and carried them all off together with the kitchen scales. Then, of course, there were honorable mentions, which I never valued very highly; they always seemed to me too indiscriminately distributed. Only recently I received one from the Chicago Art Institute, which I immediately returned with the suggestion that it be given to some struggling young student who needed such encouragement. Chicago was very kind to me during my early days of struggle; I have a great deal to thank her for; but I do not expect her to continue endowing me in my middle age with carefully rolled-up, parchment-printed honorable mentions.

I was once present at a meeting between the directors of two museums. The question came up as to when a masterpiece should begin to be a masterpiece. One of the directors said a museum should not buy a work of art until it had been a masterpiece for at least fifty years; that it was not fair to the public to take any risks. Ever since I heard that idea advanced I have been wondering who under the sun is going to start the work of art off on its fifty-year journey of becoming a masterpiece, if the museums don't. I have often tried to visualize the vicissitudes of a work of art before it

## MODELING MY LIFE

becomes recognized. I know of one case in which a man stopped in at an exhibition, looked at a piece of sculpture, exclaimed: "Ha—that's not half bad!" marked the number in the catalogue with an X and carried the catalogue home. His wife took the catalogue with her to the exhibition, saw the X, examined the piece of sculpture and told her friend that some one evidently thought it was good because an X had been placed opposite the number. This friend carried the news to her friend and in the end the work was purchased by some one, placed in his house and gradually became known as being such a good thing that a museum director came to see it and declared it a masterpiece. A replica was ordered and the work eventually placed in a museum. In this case fifty years were not necessary to find out its value; but there is no denying the fact that the success of this one work of art dates back to that original remark of "Ha—that's not half bad!" This story would point to the fact that, after all, it is the public that decides whether a thing is good or bad and not the museums. I am very much inclined to think it is the public myself and not museums or art critics; and it is surely the public that pays us a living wage for our work—and not the museums that only pay fabulous prices when a man has been dead so long that even his descendants can reap no benefit from his success.

This criticism is not said in ill nature. I have been well treated by museums in America; I have not had to wait fifty years to see my bronzes placed, though I have

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

never received from such sources any amount that would compare to what the individual purchasers are willing to give; but I do think institutions are indifferent and parsimonious to the struggling young artists in whose hands rests the future of American art. What is needed is museums which would interest themselves in what is being done now and not so much in what has been done in bygone centuries.

During the summer, after that stimulating winter of work with Stanford White, I was spending a few weeks with a sick friend near Philadelphia. My principal diversion was to walk down to the station each morning and carry back the post. One day, on my way back with a bundle of letters and papers, I found the shade of a tree very attractive, sat down and opened one of the papers to see what was going on in the world. I can still see those heavy black headlines. Stanford White killed on the roof garden of Madison Square Garden—ruthlessly shot down in one of the most beautiful buildings he had designed. It was a hot sunny day; but to me it suddenly became cold and gray; and I believe there were hundreds of people who felt as I did at that moment—all those who were associated with Stanford White in making America a more beautiful and attractive place to live in. The captain of the ship of Fine Arts had suddenly been taken from us; and we all knew there was no one to fill his place.

Several weeks after Mr. White's death I received a letter signed E. Rarig, asking for an interview and invit-

## MODELING MY LIFE

ing me for tea at Sherry's. No explanation was offered and the only suggestion made that threw light on the reason for the request for an interview was the statement that this unknown, to me, Mr. Rarig had met me in Mr. White's office. I found the letter intriguing and tried my best to think why it should have been written. In the end I accepted the invitation and went to Sherry's on the appointed afternoon, wondering how we were going to find each other in the crowd. When I entered the tea room a man with a vaguely familiar face came forward to meet me. We shook hands ceremoniously and were immediately conducted by the head waiter to a table where a most elaborate tea had already been placed. My unknown friend apparently required sustenance before divulging the reason of our meeting, for he fell upon the tea and muffins and cakes and made no immediate steps towards explanations; and I, following his example, ate the food put before me and awaited results, though I must confess the mystery was increasing every moment. He made a few casual remarks about nothing in particular and I replied in like vein; but all the time I was most industriously reviewing all the faces of the men I had seen in Mr. White's office and failing entirely to place the one before me.

My curiosity was beginning to get the better of me and I was almost on the point of exclaiming, "Well—what is it all about anyhow?" when my host's expression suddenly caught my attention. His eyes were

## THE FROG FOUNTAIN

actually shining as though they had tears just behind them.

“Miss Scudder,” he said at last, “I see you don’t remember me. I was Mr. White’s private secretary.”

Then I remembered him perfectly; though it was not extraordinary that I had not recognized him before, as he had always flashed in and out of Mr. White’s office, calling him to the long-distance telephone, reminding him of an appointment, announcing some caller—all done with such lightning speed that I never really saw him once in a stationary pose.

“Of course—I know you now!” I said.

“And naturally you are wondering why I asked you to meet me here this afternoon.”

I nodded, frankly curious.

“It was because I wanted to talk to some one who I knew felt his loss as I do,” he continued. “I wished to talk to some one like yourself about him. He meant so much to me—and I know what he meant in your work to you. Also—I wanted to tell you some of the things he said about you—things which perhaps you don’t know. Do you remember a letter you wrote to him in reply to one in which he said he hadn’t the time to come and see your work?”

Of course I remembered it; though it had never been referred to in my conversation with Mr. White.

“That made a great impression on him. He had never received a letter like that from an artist. All

## MODELING MY LIFE

the others had been apologetic and pleading. But the way you came right out from the shoulder and told him it was up to him to come and see what you were doing gave him a jolt. Suppose you hadn't written that letter!"

I nodded. "Yes—suppose I hadn't!"

"Would you like to have me tell you what he did say after he saw your first fountain figure?"

I have no intention of repeating the things said to me that day. I keep them for my own private encouragement. If I get a bit down over something that has not turned out as well as expected, I invariably recall the conversation of that day and at once begin to feel immensely cheered up. And I have never ceased to be grateful to Mr. Rarig. I never knew his first name nor anything else about him and I have never seen him since; but it was a rather wonderful experience to have some one appear out of the unknown and give me a message that was exactly like a message from the dead.

So, after all, the day Parot pushed the timid little boy in the coachman's suit into my Paris studio and told me to stop working for the dead and do something that was gay and full of the joy of life was the veritable moment of inspiration in my career. The fountain that little boy posed for was the first step out on the road that led me along until I reached a point where I was designing fountains for the gardens of McCormicks and Pratts and Rockefellers, Jennings, and so on.

## VII

### FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

I HAVE heard it said that as soon as Americans make their money the first thing they do is to buy an automobile, the second purchase is a fur coat and the third step is to have the most expensive operation possible performed. Honesty makes me confess that I followed this rule in one respect. When I had a really good bank account I indulged in something I had not only wanted but needed for years—a fur coat. I bought it in Paris from a very smart couturier—a long moleskin coat with a voluminous blue fox collar. It was quite the most sumptuous coat imaginable. I looked like nothing less than a million dollars in it—a fact which the customs officer who inspected my trunks when I arrived in New York appreciated fully.

“You say you’re an American artist temporarily residing in France,” he commented, looking at my declaration.

I nodded and tried a smile that apparently got no reaction from the harassed officer.

“What part of America do you come from?”

I felt the situation was becoming dangerous—at least so far as getting my things passed free of duty went;

## MODELING MY LIFE

however I went on smiling and let my voice drop back into the old middle-western burr.

“Terryhut—Indiana,” I drawled.

He suddenly answered my smile with a very broad grin. “Gosh—you’ve got your nerve! D’you suppose I’m easy enough to think they make fur coats like that in Indiana!”

But even if the coat were suspicious my drawl was unquestioned and won the day.

How susceptible all of us are to good clothes; those who are wearing them as well as those who look at them! A famous Paris dressmaker has said that if women only realized that it was the only message they had for the greater part of the world they would take more trouble to make this message as beautiful and pleasure-giving as possible. Many of us have a much more serious and important message to give others than just the mere pleasure of wearing good clothes. I always resent the fact that we are all much more likely to get considerate attention when we appear well dressed and with the air of having the best the world affords; but it is true. I know it from experience. Smart clothes accomplished a great deal for me; they gave me more confidence in facing New York and I think they were rather a comfort to my friends.

“Thank heavens you have at last got something beside that horrible checked golf cape!” Julia Marlowe said to me when I went into her dressing-room one night soon after a return from Paris. “You know,

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

Janet, I've always loved you dearly—you are one of the people really necessary to me—but you can't imagine how I have suffered from your clothes! Every time I shut my eyes I can see that terrible checked cape."

She and I had been very good friends ever since we met in Paris years before, just after she had married Robert Taber; and our friendship had grown all the time her success was increasing and my work was being gradually recognized.

I remember at this time an amusing incident which occurred with some friends of mine who were going through the throes of trying to get into New York society—an incident which explains perfectly why they never succeeded in their ambition. The daughter, my friend, was very anxious to meet Julia Marlowe and we had arranged to go to see her in a new play, after which I was to take her behind the scenes and present her. When her mother found out our plan, she said it would never do, that if New Yorkers heard that her daughter was associating with actresses they would never accept her into the charmed circle. The daughter wept and I laughed and the evening ended with my departure for the theater alone in a carriage filled with American Beauty roses which the daughter had ordered as an offering to the actress. The attitude of the mother in this case reminds me of a woman who was describing some social function she had attended and said: "Every one was there—from Vanderbilts down to artists."

## MODELING MY LIFE

Just such foolish, stupid ideas as these invariably ruin any one's chances of becoming a part of smart life. Smart life, if nothing else, is exceedingly independent and fearless. Its snobbism is what the French call *snobisme du goût*—which means giving the cold shoulder to every one and everything that is banal and tiresome. There are certain conventions that are observed, but they are more the conventions of manners and breeding than what might be called provincial morals. On the whole, it has been my observation that what is considered the smart group in any city—be it Paris or Chicago or New York—is made up of personalities that are individual for various reasons, distinction of family, distinction of talents, distinction in business, distinction of person—but invariably distinction of some sort. I really do not believe that distinction of money succeeds socially anywhere. Just the mere matter of having money never gets one into the charmed circle. There are thousands of people in New York who are anxious to pay their way most liberally, but they get nowhere simply because they lack those distinctive qualities that make them amusing and interesting. The mere matter of having an income of five or ten thousand dollars a day doesn't necessarily make that person an amusing addition to a party. There must be something else—and without that something else the climber fails.

Early in my experience in New York this theory was brought very clearly before me through some friends I had made there. The man and his wife were delightful

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

people—clever and interesting and most amusing. I had met them about and had been told they were among the leaders of New York society. When the wife asked me to tea I immediately got out my best bib and tucker and prepared to make as good an appearance as possible. The address was not particularly stimulating—Lexington Avenue. The house was even less impressive, a grubby narrow building in front of which the street was piled high with débris from recent repairs. A maid opened the door and showed me up narrow stairs to a front sitting room in which a small boy was playing in the middle of the floor. I had to step over a toy railway to find a seat in a shabby chair. The wife came in, in her breezy, delightful way, told me amusing stories interspersed with “Darling, not so much noise, please” addressed to the child, gave me a frugal sort of tea; and I had a charming time. In fact, I enjoyed myself so much that I stayed on and on and only realized how late it was when the husband came in from down town. The first greeting the wife gave him was: “Did you go by the laundry to get a clean shirt? You know you haven’t one in the house—and we are dining with Mrs. Astor to-night and going on to the opera afterwards.” He whistled in consternation, rushed off to the telephone and returned in a few moments all smiles. He had borrowed a clean shirt from a friend who had also invited them to go to the dinner in their motor.

I went away with the feeling that they were the nicest, simplest, friendliest people I had met for a long

## MODELING MY LIFE

time—no lugs, no pretentiousness, nothing to hide, and yet had a position that so many others would have given everything they possessed to obtain. But of course these others would have been ashamed of the location of their house, would have gone to no end of pains to keep any one from knowing they were short of clean shirts and would have felt disgraced at having a guest find their child playing in the reception room.

Bar Harbor offered me one of my first opportunities of meeting members of the leisure class of America—if we have such a thing; and also furnished me with glimpses of some of the tragedies that go on in the midst of this class. There were many people there who were received and went out on the most intimate terms with the summer colony but who, when they returned to New York for the winter, were dropped like hot cakes. Being of the hard-working class, I found great fun and oftentimes bitter disillusionment in observing the dramas going on about me; yet I always had the feeling that those who made good in society deserved it—just as the artist does who makes his reputation in the world of art. Perhaps every success in life is made up of the same ingredients, no matter if the struggle be in the direction of the fine arts, finance, society or any other human effort.

My mission at Bar Harbor was not to study the varying phases of American social life; it was to build a house for Miss Archbold—a house which was originally intended to be a sort of summer bungalow to cost about

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

six thousand dollars. That it ended in being an Italian villa and cost one hundred thousand dollars was not entirely my fault—though I'm sure if I told this story and then asked for a commission to build a house I would have very few applicants. You can't change a bungalow to an Italian villa without changing the cost considerably. This was my one and only adventure in architecture and it taught me a great deal about the methods and mistakes that we are now making in America. We are building more houses than any other country in the world to-day and the future beauty and distinction of America depend a great deal upon what we accomplish during this century.

After Miss Archbold had definitely changed her idea about having a bungalow, I went to work modeling a sketch for a villa. We were both at Giverny at the time and had great fun designing rooms and terraces and adapting Italian ideas to American landscape. When the model was finished I asked a Beaux Arts architectural student to come out to make working drawings for building the villa at Bar Harbor later on. I had had no architectural training and did not feel equipped to go on with the practical execution of the model and for this reason wished to turn the whole thing over to a real architect. We three, Miss Archbold, the architect and I, spent several rather hectic weeks over that little plaster model. The architect wished to change the whole scheme and make a regulation Beaux Arts American country house out of it, which no doubt would

## MODELING MY LIFE

have been a very good solution of the whole affair—but Miss Archbold stuck firmly to the model and would allow no changes to be made. She said she wanted and would have a house different from all the others at Bar Harbor. Finally the architect went off very cross, saying that no honest architect would undertake to execute the wretched model as it was entirely childish. I was feeling rather uncertain about it myself after those weeks of wrangling and would have urged Miss Archbold to give it up if it had not been for a small incident which happened just before the architect returned to Paris. He and I were strolling through the village on the eve of his departure when we both stopped to admire a little church perched up on the side of the road.

“What makes that little building so perfectly fascinating?” I asked him.

“The arrangement of the windows,” he answered promptly.

Now, no two of those windows were the same size and none of them were on the same level—which was exactly his complaint against my little model of a house. I made no comment, but I thought a great deal about this question. If architects grow so enthusiastic over the irregularities of windows and lines and roofs of foreign houses, why cannot we reproduce the same charm in the buildings we erect at home?

The long discussion ended in our packing up the model and taking it back to New York, where we once



*Photo A. B. Bogart, New York*

**LITTLE LADY FROM THE SEA**

One in California. Photo taken in Architectural League exhibit,  
New York.



Photo A. B. Bogart, New York  
SEATED PAN

On estate of John D. Rockefeller, Pocantico Hills, New York.

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

more consulted architects and were told by each one that the design would have to be completely changed before the house could be built. Again we picked up the model and this time took it to Bar Harbor in the middle of the winter, dug out the village contractor, showed the design to him, asked him if he could build it and in three days had all arrangements made—at least the most important arrangement to us, which consisted of finding a man who was willing to undertake the construction.

I hardly had a moment to do any sculpture that winter in New York, so occupied was I in working over drawings which the contractor kept sending down to me for consideration and correction—there were three hundred and seventy-five in all—and asking for things that were at first quite incomprehensible to me and which I had to puzzle over by the hour, often ending in taking the train to Bar Harbor to see what he meant and talk the questions over on the spot.

By summer the house was done—by hook or crook—and in spite of Beaux Arts students people say that it has charm, no matter what its architectural defects may be. It really seems that if any one wants a house that expresses himself and cannot secure an architect who has a deserved reputation, the thing to do is to make his own design and then get the village contractor to work it out for him. With such a system America would soon be as full of local color as Normandy or Brittany. At any rate, we wouldn't be continually bored with

## MODELING MY LIFE

so many impersonal, perfectly correct, cold houses as are formally standing about our delightful landscape.

My first "one-man show" in New York was held in the Starr galleries. I had brought back from Paris a good many pieces of work, among which were my Diana, the Fighting Boys, Young Pan, the Little Lady from the Sea and the Rockefeller fountain; and it was with many thrills and much anxiety that I overlooked the placing of these statues which were to stand the grilling of a New York audience. I had fully determined to stay away from the exhibit when it was opened, but self-interest got the better of me and I was promptly in the galleries early on the morning of the opening. It seemed hours before any one appeared. I wandered about disconsolately, feeling more and more certain that no one in New York was interested in my special brand of sculpture. Then, in the midst of my deep gloom, I saw the head salesman enter the galleries with a lady who, judging from the deference paid her, was some one of great importance. I hid behind a Colonial clock and watched her pass from statue to statue, examining each one carefully with raised lorgnette. The salesman stood at a respectful distance and once, finding himself near enough to me not to be overheard by the lady, whispered that she was Mrs. So-and-So and quite capable of buying the whole collection without giving it a thought.

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

“But I don’t want her to buy the whole collection without giving it a thought,” I whispered back.

He held up a warning hand and hurried towards the lady, who was showing symptoms of rendering a verdict.

“I’ve seen Miss Scudder’s Frog Fountain in the Metropolitan,” she said with the accent and solemnity of an oracle. “I have also seen her Boy and Fish.” After having made her position—at least her knowledge of my work—quite clear, she raised her lorgnette for further inspection. “Yes—I think I’ll take this charming figure. It will look well in my garden. How soon can you send it to me?”

The business of ordering finally got through, the lady cast a last glance about the room and then went towards the door followed by the bowing salesman.

“I am very much interested in the work of young artists,” she said as a sort of last pronouncement. “But one must be very careful about watching them. Sometimes one finds they progress and fail in most unexpected places. Now—take Miss Scudder for instance. She has undoubtedly made great progress with her figures—but she has gone off on her fish.”

Incidents like this make it almost compulsory for an artist to put his work in the hands of agents. The personal contact may sometimes prove disastrous. If that very rich purchaser had seen my grin she would have countermanded her order at once, I’m sure. In fact, it is much better for many reasons for the artist to let his

## MODELING MY LIFE

work stand by itself and not try to force the personal equation. Many artists think they must mingle with prominent people in order to get commissions. This may be quite true for portrait painters, but for the sculptor such contacts mean nothing. If a sculptor's work is good it will be recognized, though it may take a long time.

When my exhibition at Starr's had closed, I delivered the figure I had exhibited there and which had been designed especially for the Rockefeller garden, to the estate on the Hudson and soon after went up there to see it placed. I took along a friend with me, always finding it rather dismal to inspect my own creations without a sympathetic presence. One's clients are not always necessarily sympathetic. We stood a long time before the rustic grotto where my seated Pan appeared very happily installed; in fact he looked as though he had been there for ages. When I turned away, feeling that everything was all right, I had a very distinct longing to know if it meant anything to, or pleased, the extraordinary man who had ordered it and whom I had never seen. We were walking back through the extensive grounds—having been obliged to leave the car at the gate as none were admitted to the estate without a special permit—when there suddenly appeared over a little hill a party of golfers. It seems that we had inadvertently passed near one of the greens. We stopped until a drive had been made by an old gentleman, very lithe and active, closely fol-

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

lowed by two friends and a group of plain-clothes men, and then waited for the party to go on. As the group passed closely to us I recognized Mr. Rockefeller from photographs I had seen of him; and I was very much surprised when I saw him turn from his path and come towards me with outstretched hand and one of the pleasantest smiles I have ever seen—one which newspapers and cameras seem never to record.

“Aren’t you Miss Scudder?” he asked, shaking my hand warmly. “I suppose you’ve come to see how your Pan looks in my garden. I am delighted with the little figure; and I am so much indebted to you for helping to make the grotto beautiful.”

I had always heard that Mr. Rockefeller was a hard, cold, unapproachable sort of person—rather a dragon, in fact—and had been relieved that all the business connected with my work had been carried on with his architect, but my meeting with him wiped out such erroneous impressions. As I stood there talking to him I found myself wishing all my clients were as nice as he was.

Most people who buy sculpture seem to feel that when they have paid the sculptor for doing the work they have no further obligations towards him, at least no reason in the world for telling him that his work has been satisfactory or given any pleasure. I have often wanted to tell them that each time we sell a bronze or a marble we are selling a part of our personality and that it would be a great joy to have the purchaser of

## MODELING MY LIFE

the work, the one who is going to live with it the rest of his life, say something about it. Of course some do this, write nice letters and are most sympathetic, but the majority appear to have no more feeling about it, no more obligations towards the artist, than they would have towards the man who delivers them the coal that is going to keep them warm for the winter. I suppose it is quite natural not to think of thanking the man who delivers the coal which is going to make your house comfortable; so why bother about thanking the artist who tries to make your surroundings more beautiful? Probably we all expect too much. At any rate I was not expecting anything at all that day in the Pocantico Hills garden and it is probably for that reason that whenever I hear the name of Rockefeller I immediately think of a delightful old gentleman who showed appreciation of my work in words that have lingered so pleasantly in my memory.

A little studio I took in Fortieth Street during one of my visits to New York became a sort of rendezvous for a circle of interesting people. I took it to get away from hotel life, and though it was the simplest place imaginable—a studio, room, bath and kitchenette—it was in a way the setting for an extremely brilliant group. About this time I had learned to make coffee in the so-called Southern style and there was always a quantity of it on hand at tea time. Some one said she always knew when she had turned the corner into my street from the almost overpowering scent of coffee and

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

plasteline that emanated from my studio. This period in my career shows how easily an artist, when he has once begun to make friends, can almost without knowing it become swamped in a group that makes life very attractive but can also ruin him for any really creative work. It was due to this group and to mere chance that I got started on a foolish road that absorbed all my time and attention for many months. Marjorie Curtis—now Mrs. John Chadbouren—was spending an afternoon with me when, suddenly quite enthusiastic over the striking beauty of her head, I began a little terra cotta bust of her. She came in the next afternoon to sit for me again and several of her friends dropped in. The little terra cotta head was admired and before the afternoon was gone every one in the studio said she wanted me to do her in the same way. I laughed, as I had only done it for my own pleasure and not professionally; but when Mrs. John Carpenter said she would postpone her departure for Chicago in order to give me sittings, I submitted and from that moment entered upon a rather hectic series of little heads. Linda Lee Thomas came next among the beauties I did; then followed Mrs. Newbold Leroy Edgar, Mrs. James Eustice—now the Marquise de Polignac, Mrs. Benjamin Guinness and a number of others. The terra cotta heads had suddenly become the fashion. Each sitter brought his or her friends and the little studio became so crowded and stifling with the scent of coffee and plasteline that it was almost unbearable.

## MODELING MY LIFE

able. Anne Morgan and Elisabeth Marbury joined the habitués and introduced cooncan among those who were not at the moment having their heads perpetuated in terra cotta. I began to feel exactly like a dentist; appointments overlapped; and my little heads, which I enjoyed doing at first, began to lose their charm for me.

I was already on the point of throwing the whole thing up when two events showed me quite definitely that I was not only being bored but growing very nervous besides. The first was when a mother had bothered me for weeks to do her child and, when I consented, accompanied the child and insisted upon measuring every feature just before the little bust was finished with her pocket handkerchief. You can imagine how futile this was when you know that the heads were only six inches high and of course much smaller than life. The second incident was a little more lurid. A Wall Street financier had fallen into the habit of dropping in at my studio before it became so crowded. He was mildly interested in art and I suppose liked to talk about it quietly with a good strong cup of coffee to help along inspiration. When the little heads had become such a fad he found the studio entirely too crowded for his comfort and, though he still came often, made no effort to hide his annoyance. One afternoon, when he found no place to sit down, he showed his irritation to the extent of replying, when asked how he liked the head I was doing, that it was

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

nice enough but might just as well be the head of any one at all so far as likeness went.

I have always confessed quite frankly that I hated criticism from unprofessional people. This time I particularly hated it as a roar of laughter went up from the crowd at a moment when I was working on the eyes. I threw down my tools, walked straight across to the Wall Street financier, took him by the collar of his coat in the back with one hand and the lapels in front with the other and before he knew what had happened had lifted him off his feet and placed him outside the door.

I was mortified beyond words when I realized how far my irritation had carried me—or him, to put it more correctly—and I went to extreme lengths later on to make it up to him and try to get his friendship back. But though he was always polite and showed himself a good sport, there were never any more afternoon visits on his part to my studio. His friends made it miserable for him for a long time; but my respect for him went up tremendously when I heard what he said about me, if my name were mentioned in his presence: "Oh, yes, Janet Scudder, charming woman and—tremendously *strong*." He was certainly one of the most distinguished men I met in New York. His self-control was admirable and filled me with envy.

I was continually being impressed with the versatility, variety and delightful qualities of the New York successful business man. Much has been written about the New York woman; but so few writers take an interest

## MODELING MY LIFE

in describing our men. I find them stimulating and interesting in their extraordinary points of view. They do things with a breadth and lavishness that seem to me a throw-back to more picturesque days than we are now living in.

I was particularly lucky one winter when I was occupying the top floor studio of Mrs. William Astor Chanler's house in 19th Street—she had very generously offered it to me for the few weeks I was to work in New York—over the design for the McCormick Fountain with Charles Platt, the great country-house architect. Mrs. Chanler's group of friends included the most amusing and clever people, particularly the men, who knew how to play the game of life perfectly; they did things with an extraordinary style and knew better than any men of any other nationality I have ever known how to give one a good time.

I was sitting next a man at dinner one night who asked me what I thought of the Tango; he said that New York was quite topsy-turvy over it and that he would like to know whether it appealed to a sculptor or not. I was just back from Paris, where it had made little impression, none on me, and I asked him what it was—something to eat, to see or to wear. He appeared shocked at my ignorance and immediately asked if I would be in my studio at five o'clock the next day. I told him I would and nothing more was said about the Tango.

At five o'clock the next afternoon Mrs. Chanler's

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

butler came up to the studio and announced that three "persons" were downstairs asking for me. They had not given their names and as I did not want to make the butler climb downstairs and all the way up again, I told him to send them up. I watched the hole made by the staircase into the studio with some interest. One by one three heads appeared, followed by bodies—two extremely dapper-looking young men and a very dressy lady. When they reached the studio I bowed and asked what they wanted and they replied they had been sent "to dance for Miss Scudder." For the first time it flashed over me that they must have something to do with the mysterious word Tango—and I knew now that that must be some sort of a dance.

I asked my strange guests to sit down; then I began to roll up the carpets and clear the floor. They made no movement to help me, no doubt having reached the conclusion that I was some sort of a queer domestic—I was wearing a sculptor's apron—who was making preparations for the party. When I had got the floor in order and the chairs pushed back, I turned to them and said: "Well—I suppose you might as well begin."

They all looked at me and each other in amazement. "What!" the leader said. "Dance here now! Where's the party?"

"I am," I replied meekly, by this time quite overcome with embarrassment at the whole proceeding.

They consulted together and then the musician went to the piano, began playing and Maurice and Florence

## MODELING MY LIFE

Walton danced for me alone throughout the hour for which, I afterwards learned, they must have been paid a fantastic sum.

Another man who showed a talent for doing things in the grand style was Mr. John Trask, who was in charge of the art exhibit of the San Francisco Exposition. I had begun to wonder if I were going to be asked to send any of my work to that exposition, when I received a letter from Mr. Trask asking me to dine with him one night at the Knickerbocker Hotel. He said nothing about his reason for asking me to dine, nor did he mention it during the long and very elaborate dinner. It was only after the coffee had been served and he had lighted a cigarette for me and a long black cigar for himself that he considered the moment propitious. Having played the host to perfection, he was now prepared to assume the rôle of clever business man. Out came notebook and pencil and a direct question:

“And now, Miss Scudder, let’s get down to business. What are you going to let me have for the exposition?”

“Anything you want,” I answered promptly.

Mr. Trask thought this over a few moments; then, without further comment, he quickly made out a list in his notebook of ten of my bronzes.

“But how under the sun can I get ten bronzes ready for you?” I exclaimed.

“That can be arranged. I have been to your agents, the Gorham Company, this morning. I have also inter-

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

viewed your bronze foundry. If we make a sufficient effort the thing can be put through."

And it was—just as he had planned it. If he had written me a letter and left the matter to correspondence I'm sure he would have had only about half the things he wanted. With such methods the New York, and for that matter all American, business men succeed. They make up their minds what they want and go after it.

During that visit to New York I had a little excursion into political life, due to the fact that Mrs. Norman Whitehouse asked me one night across her dinner table what I was doing for woman's rights.

"Well, Vera," I said, slightly embarrassed for an answer, "you know I am a sculptor and haven't much time to think about my own or any one else's rights."

Her scorn was scathing and after a fiery grilling from her I felt entirely crushed—which was only the beginning of what she intended to do to me. The next morning she drove me down to Macdougal Alley to a meeting of the Art Committee Section of the "Woman's Rights Organization" and stood over me while I was made a member and given certain duties to perform. After this her interest never flagged. If she saw signs of slackness or lessening of attention, she immediately carried me off to luncheon or dinner and began hammering at me again. Through her influence I became a fairly active suffragette. During one of the great pa-

## MODELING MY LIFE

rades given at that time, I had charge of the art group, which of course interested me particularly, in spite of the fact that walking up Fifth Avenue in white clothes on a bitterly cold day was calculated to lessen any one's belief in any sort of rights—except those of a warm and snug hearth.

Another delightful person at that time in New York was Mrs. Benjamin Guinness, who had a charming old house in Washington Square, where she entertained the most clever people of New York and many foreign visitors. Her Tuesday parties were the most entertaining affairs I have ever attended. I never missed one of them if I could help it. Her salon was extraordinarily cosmopolitan and one met there people from all corners of the world. It seems to me that New York suffered a great loss when Mrs. Guinness closed her house and returned to London. I particularly feel the loss as hers was one of the few houses where I knew that my niche was always waiting for me. Perhaps this was due to her English traits; once a friend, an English person is always a friend; travel and absence do not seem to erase pleasant memories.

While these different circles and personalities and thoroughly delightful people were forming a part of my life each time I made a visit to or spent a year in New York, I had the feeling that they invariably carried me a little away from my real work. In a way it was most natural, for I always enjoyed myself immensely, and the experience had a good deal to do with

## FRIENDLY NEW YORKERS

broadening my interests—which is always valuable to an artist. One can't remain eternally locked in one's studio always at work. A break in training is quite salutary; it does every one good. But too many people, too many amusements, too many interests, invariably pall on me after a certain time.

My exits from New York are usually much more precipitate than my arrivals there. When I find I have had just as much of it as I can possibly assimilate—probably too much for real assimilation—I go back to France and settle down in the old rut in Paris. New York is the most stimulating place in the world and the friendliest—after you have made your success—but I don't believe it is the best place in which to do creative work. It furnishes too much inspiration, too much material, too many suggestions; in order to digest all it gives one and produce, it seems to me an absolute necessity to get away from it.

Pauses come now and then, even in the somewhat restless life of an artist—pauses in which one looks about and takes stock of what one has done, what there is to do next. One of these pauses came to me once when I was in New York. I had just finished a large commission for which I had been very well paid; in fact the whole year had been successful and my bank account had increased most satisfactorily. I had begun to make investments and everything had turned out well. At last I had, even without working, an income. Magic word! I took a long breath and smiled as no

## MODELING MY LIFE

one in the world knows how to smile except those who have started with nothing and make by force of will and determination enough to live on comfortably the rest of their days. It is a wonderful thought—for a little while. Then—presto!—the old driving force of the past comes rushing back and you realize that, after all, that is not what you have been working for. You have been working for the joy of creating—adding something to the beauty of the world. I don't believe this is what so many call artistic temperament. Other workers have it just as much as artists. Once into the swing of the life we have cut out for ourselves there is very little let-up. Mr. Bok said there was a time to stop and rest and let others go ahead; yet he does not seem to have made an entire success of his theory. His endeavors have only shifted; he is apparently working as hard as ever.

At any rate, I did pause and look about me and put numerous questions to myself. And the question that took first place above all others was: "Where am I going to really settle down and live? Where do I want my home to be? Shall it be New York or Paris? or where?"



**FISH GIRL**

In Sabin home, Shinnecock Hills,  
Long Island.



**SHELL FOUNTAIN**

On estate of Mrs. Harold McCormick (Edith Rockefeller), Lake Forest, Illinois.



*Wide World Photo—© N. Y. Times Co.*

**JANET SCUDDER IN HER STUDIO, PARIS**

## VIII

### WANDERINGS

As I have said, I have always found New York too exciting a place to produce my best work there. There is so much to do, there are so many amusements, so many surprises, so many adventures and so much telephoning that concentration for me is quite impossible. Affairs move too fast in New York; vital changes take place in people's lives often in a few hours; one may be as poor as a church mouse one moment and as rich as Croesus the next. It is all extremely exhilarating—which makes it one of the most fascinating places in the world to go to; but for a calm, definite pursuit of an idea, I have found Paris a much better place in which to work. In Paris there are few changes; one always finds one's niche there when one returns—no matter how long one may have been away. In New York one seems to begin life all over again upon each arrival.

I have had my present studio in Paris for ten years; and when I return from trips home I invariably find the same concierge to greet me, the same little restaurants near by, everything the same and always a pleasant greeting on all sides. I have employed the same coiffeur in Paris for years and when I return after a long absence the whole family comes forth to greet

## MODELING MY LIFE

me. Having been in Paris during the war, my relations with the people in the Latin Quarter are very close. If I stayed away twenty years, I feel perfectly sure I would find my niche awaiting me when I got back. In a way it has something very closely akin to the personality and intimacy of small-town life.

There is sometimes a certain expressed distrust on the part of tourists in France towards the French people. I always resent this distrust, for years spent among them have convinced me that there is no foundation for lack of confidence. I have had a great deal of experience with them and I have never once felt that I had been deceived or cheated by any one of them. In their business dealings they are perfectly correct and honest; their spoken word is just as good as their written word and can absolutely be depended upon.

In looking back over the years I have spent in Paris I find myself particularly remembering the time I lived in a little house in the Rue de la Grande Chaumière. I was there three continuous years—perhaps the most profitable and interesting years of my career. I worked incessantly, all day long and sometimes late into the night, and I was happy all the time. I often think that I was particularly fortunate in being in sympathetic surroundings at the period when my productive energies were at their height. Every one of us has a series of years like that, years when his flame burns brightly, years that are an accumulation of everything that has gone before and years that actually model

## WANDERINGS

the future. To some this period comes early in youth, to others late in life. It was my experience to hit a happy average. The poverty and struggle and sadness of my early days were all left behind; I was living in a present that was filled with energy and ambition; and the future looked comfortingly bright. Yes—that was a very wonderful time.

The little house had two floors. On the top one was a studio with bedroom behind it; on the street floor was a sitting-room with kitchen and maid's room adjoining. My sleeping quarters were absolutely remote from all noises and my studio was so situated that I could get up in the middle of the night and work without disturbing any one. I have never had surroundings that suited me so perfectly. The house was not big enough to be bothersome and yet it was quite comfortable for living purposes.

Once settled there, I decided to put aside each Saturday as a day of rest and one on which to receive my friends. In this way I felt that I could safeguard my time and still not lead the life of a hermit. It is extraordinary how many Americans pass through Paris. The well-known motto that says all roads lead to Rome should be changed in these more modern days to Paris. Does any one who goes to Europe consider for a moment not passing some time there!

Those Saturday afternoons proved very delightful affairs, though I must say the first one was rather a disappointment. I made great preparations for it, prac-

## MODELING MY LIFE

tically bought out an entire pastry shop and filled the little sitting-room with flowers. Then I sat down and waited for the crowd to pour in. Hours passed. I nibbled at the mass of cakes and wandered about disconsolately. About six o'clock the bell rang. A pathetic old maid who lived for her tea was shown in; but even with her very good appetite no impression was made on that day's output of the pastry shop.

The following Saturday was not much better; only three or four people appeared; but before the winter was over my living-room was filled each week with all sorts of people from all sorts of places. Two Danish friends came often and contributed very passionate music on the violin and piano—Eva Mudocci and Bella Edvards; Yorksa, formerly of the Odéon, recited and brought all her theatrical friends to do the most entertaining stunts; Madame X, a writer, who later amused herself by cutting her husband up into small pieces and despatching him to some foreign country in a trunk, came several times. How thrilled we should have been if we had known we were associating with a future murderer!

My Saturdays at home became a funny mixture of the World and Bohemia; the World a bit frightened by extraordinary "types"; Bohemia offish but thrilled to see the World so closely. Mrs. Stanford White never failed to turn up—that charming woman so adored by her friends; Henry Adams, whom I had known in Washington, came often; Gertrude Stein, the discoverer of Matisse and the inventor of a new litera-

## WANDERINGS

ture; Teddy Bean, the clever New York writer; Gordon Craig, who has done more for reforming stage settings than any one else; Madame Maeterlinck—Georgette Le Blanc; Mabel Dodge—to and fro from her Florentine ghost-haunted villa; Mildred Aldrich—afterwards so famous for her “Hilltop on the Marne”; Robert Bacon, then our ambassador in Paris; and many others well known or unknown as the case might be. I always went to bed after those Saturday afternoons with my head buzzing with new ideas and fragments of expressed opinions that were stimulating and suggestive.

I enjoyed particularly, during those days, having Mr. and Mrs. Bacon and Mrs. White dine with me in my little house. We were a perfectly happy combination. Mr. Bacon had been interested enough in my work to buy one of my fountains and place it in the hall of the Embassy, which pleased me immensely. I was proud of having my work decorate one of our foreign missions; and I have since thought that it would be an excellent idea if all our missions abroad had examples of the work of American artists in them. The French always furnish their embassies with Gobelin tapestries and Sèvres porcelains, which serve the double purpose of making the surroundings very handsome and at the same time showing to the world the artistic productions of France.

One Fourth of July, Mrs. White and I went with all the other good Americans to pay our respects to our ambassador. We stood in line with the crowd and shook

## MODELING MY LIFE

hands formally when our time came and were just passing on when Mr. Bacon whispered to us to come back again. We immediately got in line again, were once more presented, talked as long as we dared and passed on for the second time. We kept this up the entire afternoon, being greeted each time by the ambassador and Mrs. Bacon as though they had never seen us before.

Robert Bacon represented to me the perfect type of American man, splendid to look at and of the simplest and most charming manners. The last time I saw him was at Plattsburg when I went to see my nephew, Robbins Conn, in camp. Just as we drove in the gate, Mr. Bacon was passing along in his shirt sleeves carrying a bucket of water in one hand and a sponge in the other. He looked like a splendid warrior, in spite of the pail and the sponge, and had lost none of his distinction since he had discarded the ambassadorial trappings in which I had first known him. He was most kind in helping me find my nephew that day in the wilderness of young Americans preparing for war—a nephew who later made me prouder of him and his share in the fight for the freedom of France than any other thing connected with my life. My pride in him had begun long before when I had had something to do with urging him to come to Paris to study architecture, where he made a record as the youngest foreigner to successfully pass his entrance examinations into the Beaux Arts; but that was nothing in comparison with my feelings when he left Plattsburg wearing a little tin medal

## WANDERINGS

which had been given him for sharp shooting. During the war he acquired honorable mentions all along the way and ended his exploits with the Croix de Guerre and the Distinguished Service Cross. He seemed to be always in the thick of the fight and yet was only once slightly wounded; and now, like all our bravest, he keeps his medals locked up in a desk. Why they don't wear them is a mystery to me. If I had medals for bravery, I'm sure I should never be seen in public without having the rewards sparkling on my chest.

While living in the Rue de la Grande Chaumière, I made one of my best friends among the French people—a friendship which has increased with the years and which has had something to do with the appreciation of modern French sculpture in America. Our meeting came about in a rather entertaining way. I happened to look in at an exhibition one day and came across a little bronze, a really superb piece of work representing nothing more important than a rabbit—but something that appealed to me at once as being a very beautiful work of art. I bought that rabbit on the spot—the only piece of sculpture I have ever bought—and gave my address for its delivery at the close of the exhibition. A few days later my servant brought a card up to the studio—the card of Mademoiselle Jane Poupelet, sculptor of my precious rabbit. She explained that she had called to have a look at an artist who had bought the work of another woman artist. I was very glad her curiosity had brought her to me as I was anxious to see more

## MODELING MY LIFE

work by so great a sculptor. Returning her visit almost immediately, I found, in her studio in the Rue Dutot, a collection of small bronzes that convinced me that Mademoiselle Poupelet was one of the most important sculptors of our times.

On my next trip to America I took over with me seven of Poupelet's works, as at that time she was unknown in America and I felt that her influence on American art would be valuable. I wanted every American student of sculpture to have the benefit of studying her extraordinary work. I was not disappointed in arousing appreciation at once. The Metropolitan Museum bought the most important bronze of the collection—"Femme à sa toilette"—and gave it a star place in the Rodin Gallery. The remaining six bronzes I sent to the exhibition at the National Academy. This latter organization accepted one of the bronzes—a tiny duck; and refused the other five! Some enterprising journalist got hold of the astounding information that Poupelet had been bought one day by the Metropolitan Museum and refused the next by the Academy; and from that moment my telephone began to ring and continued to ring for three days and nights—all on the subject of Poupelet. Columns were given her by the newspapers, which included interviews with the Academy jury artists who had refused her work, interviews with me and pictures of the bronzes—all of which were of course immediately sold. I even went so far as to break into print myself and wrote an article in which I said that Poupelet was

## WANDERINGS

the most original artist of our day and that "she has not begged, borrowed or stolen from any nation or any school of art." When this article appeared, the type-setter printed my statement to read—"she has begged, borrowed and stolen from every nation and every school of art." My fury with the editor drove the poor fellow into giving Poupelet pages of free advertising for weeks.

Added to all this publicity was another windfall for Poupelet. One of the officials connected with the Academy had been very much preoccupied with the fact that no precautions were ever taken to prevent loss by theft during an exhibition. He wanted the small bronzes wired to their pedestals and the small pictures wired to the walls. But the gentleman could get no one to listen to his fears. Finally, he had the bright idea of stealing a bronze himself just to show the Academy how easily a work of art could be lifted from the galleries and how correct he was in his arguments.

His choice for this demonstration fell upon Poupelet's duck. Again a furore of newspaper excitement with a picture of the now famous duck in all the journals! The poor gentleman who had caused all the turmoil got very much confused by the hornets' nest he had stirred up, the duck was secretly replaced and the amateur thief only confessed his crime months later. In the meantime Poupelet's name was on every one's lips. Her reputation was made in America.

I do not mean to suggest that Poupelet's work would

## MODELING MY LIFE

not have been acknowledged and appreciated eventually. Nothing really good ever fails to be recognized in our country. MacMonnies once said that all one had to do to achieve success in America was to produce the best. What that best happened to be did not matter; it might just be a button; but if it were the best button that had ever been made New York would very soon find it out and give it success. Of course it is very likely that it would have taken very much longer to introduce the work of Poupelet into the hearts of my country people if the Academy had not lent its assistance so generously. At any rate I sailed back to France with the great satisfaction of having awakened the interest of my own people in the artist whom I considered the best sculptor in France.

Being possessed with the spirit of my roving ancestors, I have periodically pulled up stakes and gone off with my furniture looking for new homes—though, in the back of my mind is always the certainty that I will return eventually to the Latin Quarter. It seems the natural end of every journey I make. Once I decided nothing would please me so well as living on a farm; and I happened to be driving through Provence at the time this decision reached climax in the midst of a landscape which is admitted to be one of the most beautiful in the world. To make my decision absolutely definite, my friend, Mrs. Lane, who was motoring with me, agreed that nothing could be more perfect than to look out every day upon a country as beautiful as that

## WANDERINGS

of Provence. We bought a farm near Aix and moved from Paris with all our furniture and the intention of living there happily ever after. It took us a surprisingly short time to realize that landscapes are all very well in their way—but that people are much more exhilarating. We looked our full upon the lovely scene that stretched away from our house; but at night, when there was not a single light to be seen, our longing for friends became tragic. At the end of five months the Latin Quarter called so insistently that we sold the farm and returned to our happy stamping ground.

I went even further in my wanderings once and decided—inspired by an English novel in which the delightful vagabond hero lived in a van and wandered about happily from place to place—to live in a tent. I was sure this was an inspiration that I had been awaiting for years. The idea appealed to me as being absolutely perfect. I went straight out and bought a tent before the inspiration had time to cool. It was quite easy to find—the shop in New York appeared to be filled with them—and before the day was over I had ordered one that promised all the comforts of home with none of the disadvantages. There was a wooden floor, also there were real windows made of wire mosquito netting, there were nice little curtains that could be pulled up and down; and as a finishing touch I had a skylight made of isinglass which turned my tent into a studio as well as living quarters. The accessories that went with tent life kept me occupied for days; they

## MODELING MY LIFE

were quite the most fascinating purchases I have ever made.

One of the most delightful sides of tent life—in prospect—was that it was going to make my visits to my friends in America that summer so simple. Instead of bothering them about putting aside a room for me or timing my arrival to fit in with the departure of some other guest, I would just ask for a small space on their lawns, have the tent sent ahead to be put up and thus be entirely independent. But for some strange reason my friends didn't take to the idea at all. They invited me to visit them as usual in the summer, but none of them included an invitation for my tent.

As a matter of fact my tent life ended more abruptly than my farm experience. The only time I got a chance to use the idea was just after I had finished doing my little Victory, for which Irene Castle had posed. I wanted to do another figure of her, and she was leaving town for her Long Island home. When I suggested that I bring along my tent and do the work there she agreed heartily, saying to bring along anything I wanted to. I had at last found some one who was not opposed to my tent. I had it shipped over to Long Island and sent along my studio boy and a man to help him put it up. I waited three whole, very impatient, days for them to return and tell me everything was ready for me. It seems they had found it a somewhat difficult proposition to get the tent up. At any rate I was very happy that my idea was at last going to

## WANDERINGS

be realized, packed several valises and took the train to Port Washington. Imagine my disappointment when I arrived and found the Castles had made all arrangements for me to live in the house and would not allow me to occupy the tent. However, I insisted upon using it as a studio—for just about two minutes. The sun beating down made it absolutely impossible to remain there longer; and the first and only attempt at tent life ended with a rush for bathing suits and spending the rest of the day in the water trying to cool off. On the whole I suppose my friends were right; tents are not satisfactory for guests.

Many sculptors and painters believe that Rome offers the perfect residence for artists. Germans and Russians and Scandinavians usually cling to this belief, perhaps because of the brilliant sunshine which is such a novelty to them, rather than the stimulating surroundings of past glories. But though Italy periodically calls to me—there are times when no other place will satisfactorily meet my needs—I have not often been able to live there contentedly for a long time. Though once, fed up with too much work and too many people and too much telephone in New York, I fled to Florence and spent a whole year there. In all that time, I accomplished only one piece of work—my Tortoise Boy. One piece of work in a whole year is entirely too little for a sculptor to produce.

At another time I spent several months in Rome, going there primarily for the purpose of having the

## MODELING MY LIFE

fountain I had done for the Harold McCormick garden cast in bronze. I enjoyed the months there immensely —due in great measure to Mabel McGinnis, one of the most delightful women I know, who has since sailed off into diplomacy as the wife of Norval Richardson. She was an ardent lover of Rome and knew it perhaps even better than the Romans themselves—an excellent playmate for a newcomer. After a period of sight-seeing, I rented a studio and began to model. It may have been the overpowering effect of too much beauty all about me or it may have been the discouraging atmosphere of the bitterly cold studio; at any rate work was impossible. I actually did nothing.

An enormous stove burning wood gave out absolutely no heat; and the model, all the time she was posing for a nude statue, wore a voluminous cloak wrapped tightly about her. If I were modeling a leg, she would carefully draw back a fold of the cloak and display an inch or two of her leg; if I were working on the neck, she would turn down her collar grudgingly; in fact, whenever she got up on the model stand, she would ask anxiously: "What part of me do you want to see to-day?" I literally modeled her inch by inch and never saw what she looked like in the altogether. I came to the conclusion that the only time to work successfully with a Roman model was when the weather was so hot that I couldn't work at all.

By the time I had lived three consecutive years in my little house in the Rue de la Grande Chaumière my

## WANDERINGS

quarters began to grow somewhat cramped—owing to the plaster casts and armatures and all the paraphernalia that a sculptor invariably collects. Then, also, an old stable in the street was pulled down to make room for the “tin” church which was being built just behind the Girls’ Club. With the destruction of the stable, an army of rats were cast out upon the world. Of course they had to find other quarters and with one accord they decided upon my house. My love of animals has never carried me to the extent of cultivating rats; and when they descended upon me—the largest I have ever seen, quite as big as my dog—I knew that something had to be done. In connection with this alarming situation was the fact that my lease was about up. The outcome of the episode was that I decided I wanted a house in the country near Paris.

I asked my bronze founder one day if he knew of anything that would suit me. In a few days he appeared, said he had found just the place for me and suggested that I drive out with him at once to Ville d’Avray and see the property. The house was quite charming, XVIII Century, set in a garden with a wall round it and with a studio a short distance from the house. There were enormous trees on the property and a little stream of water falling over rocks into a series of basins. I was enchanted with the surroundings, thought I had found the ideal spot and moved out there that fall—leaving the rats in the Rue de la Grande Chaumière to the mercies of another tenant.

## MODELING MY LIFE

After living in Ville d'Avray for a few months—it is only about half an hour out of Paris—I decided to buy the place; and on Friday, June 13, 1913, I took over the titles and became an owner of property—the first piece of land and the first house that I had ever called my own. It is a rather wonderful experience, after you have struggled along for many years without anything, to find yourself actually living in a house and on ground that is registered in your name and for which you have paid out of your own earnings. It gives a sort of permanent feeling that nothing else in the world quite equals. And in Ville d'Avray, I had the added pleasure of looking out upon those lovely shady avenues and woods and sylvan perspectives that Corot has reproduced in almost every one of his paintings. But, unfortunately for me, my life at Ville d'Avray was never entirely satisfactory. Evidently there were too many thirteens and too much Friday present on the day of the purchase—as was shown later on.

Undoubtedly the war had a great deal to do with my continued wanderings; and like so many who were in Europe at the time, the holocaust broke upon me entirely unexpectedly. I had returned from America to France in the early spring, meaning to spend the summer in Ville d'Avray. The long, damp winter had been particularly hard on my old house and I found, on opening it, that many repairs were necessary. Instead of enjoying guests, whom I had invited to stop with me, I was surrounded by masons and plumbers for weeks and



YOUNG PAN FOUNTAIN

This was done for Robert Bacon when he was Ambassador to France.  
Now on estate of Mrs. Robert Bacon. Photo taken in American  
Embassy in Paris.



*Photo A. B. Bogart, New York*

**VICTORY STATUETTE**

## WANDERINGS

weeks. By July, when the work was finished, I was so exhausted with the noise and confusion of workmen that I decided to move into Paris, having found a good tenant for my house who wanted to take it over at once. A curious loneliness had settled upon me at Ville d'Avray—perhaps a premonition of the oncoming crisis—and when I found myself safely tucked away in the Hôtel Foyot with a studio near by in the Rue Racine, I had a much more contented feeling than I had had in the country.

A few days after I had got settled in town, I returned to Ville d'Avray to work on some unfinished sculpture which I had left in the studio there. My tenant's butler told me that his mistress had gone into town to order coal for the house as she had heard that it might be difficult later on to obtain fuel of any sort, but that she intended to come back by noon and hoped that I would lunch with her. I went on into the studio, settled down to work and remained there for hours without thought of time. As I had neither watch nor clock in the studio, I had no idea that it was getting late until I began to feel hungry and wonder why the butler did not come out and announce luncheon. I looked up at the skylight and saw that the sun was touching it.—which meant that it must be about three o'clock. Then I decided to go to the house and find out what was the matter. A scene of utter confusion met me there. Trunks had been pulled down from the store room and all the servants were rushing about in the

## MODELING MY LIFE

greatest excitement. My tenant's maid was trying to give directions about the packing, and in the mad excitement very little was being accomplished. I gazed at the scene in bewilderment, not having the slightest idea what it was all about. Instead of finding a well-ordered house and a delightful hostess waiting to give me a good luncheon, I found everything upside down. To increase my amazement, no one paid the slightest attention to me as I stood at the door and looked on.

I finally went towards the hysterical maid, who was throwing clothes into a trunk.

"What on earth is the matter?" I exclaimed. "And where is your mistress?"

"Madame has gone to Brittany to join her relatives," she burst forth. "She sent me back here to pack her trunks as quickly as possible."

"Is some one ill?"

She stared at me through frightened eyes, then turned again to the packing.

"Why all this haste and confusion?" I insisted upon having some sort of an answer.

Again she stopped long enough to stare at me. "It is the war, mademoiselle."

"War! What war? Who is fighting?"

"France and Germany!"

It seems incredible that I should not have known that we were on the verge of war; but any one who was in Europe at that time knows that the bomb was sprung in just this unexpected way. No one thought that our

## WANDERINGS

existence, which was going on so peacefully and normally, could possibly change in this manner over night. Of course rumors and uncertainty filled the air, but no one—at least no one who was not directly implicated—really paid much attention to what was being said in the newspapers. We felt so perfectly assured that prime ministers and rulers and most of all financiers would see that that whole tangle got no further than heated discussions. A war was a thing of the past; it belonged to the dark ages.

The maid chattered on with information, telling me there would be no more passenger trains from Ville d'Avray after six o'clock that afternoon and that, if I intended to get anything into Paris, I had better begin packing at once. I turned away from her, wholly doubtful and still thinking all this confusion was unnecessary and exaggerated. However, under the excitement of the others, it seemed best to take a few precautions; and so I went to work to get together a few things which I thought I would take into Paris with me in case something actually did happen—a tapestry, some bed linen and my silver. Then came the question of carrying my baggage to the station. With this in view, still quite calm and disposed to treat the whole matter as hysterical, I went out on the road to call a passing fiacre. The ominous desertion of the street shocked me. There was not a living soul in sight. While I stood there, finally convinced that something unusual was happening, a cab dashed into the road and came madly towards

## MODELING MY LIFE

me. As it drew near, I recognized the driver, a man I had often employed. I waved to him and, when he drew up, told him I wanted to go to the station with my trunks. He hesitated a few seconds, then sprang down, threw my baggage into his cab, waved me into the seat and once more resumed his breakneck speed, shouting out to me over his shoulder that he had just received his call to arms, was to go off to the war that night and was leaving his wife and eight children. Poor fellow! I never saw him again.

By this time I was beginning to feel that war was really upon us; and once at the station there was much more convincing evidence. I found a riot of people with luggage there—all hurriedly returning to Paris. While I waited for the train, I noticed that a little building opposite the station, which had always been closed, was now surrounded by men. In the open door a soldier stood calling out numbers and handing out to the line of men who came up in silent order all sorts of war equipment. Guns, uniforms and army boots were being rapidly and methodically distributed—and all done with a seriousness pregnant with foreboding.

A strange sight greeted me when I arrived in Paris late that afternoon. When I had left in the morning everything had been perfectly tranquil and normal. In a few hours everything had changed. As I left the station on foot—it was impossible to find either taxi or fiacre—the streets were tremendously impressive. Masses of people were clamoring for the latest editions of the

## WANDERINGS

evening papers which were just out. The air was filled with a veritable whirlwind of newspapers hurtling through the air in every direction. Every one grabbed at them and the newsboys—tossed about by the crowd—threw the papers above the heads of the people on all sides. Then, while I stood looking on at this panic of anxiety, a sudden calm settled over the streets. Where they had been noisy and filled with mad scrambling a few moments before, they were now almost as quiet as a tomb. Every living person appeared suddenly to have become paralyzed where he stood, as every pair of eyes and every mind concentrated on reading the ultimatum which meant that it was now absolutely necessary to go out and face death for the defense of France.

I always think of those fluttering newspapers when any one mentions the beginning of the war. I can still see those unfolded sheets—they were only single pages—go fluttering through the air like a flock of birds—and surely birds of ill omen.

All that night there was the tramp, tramp, tramp of heavy army boots beneath my hotel window; and as I leaned out I saw an endless procession of phantom figures passing on into the night—ominous, vague, full of sinister suggestion.

From that moment on, every one's existence was changed. Nothing was the same. Chaos reigned supreme. And through it all one had the feeling that some withering hand had touched the sources of our daily

## MODELING MY LIFE

life and suddenly paralyzed everything. The complete shifting of energies and thought was nothing short of magic. The way certain things became absolutely static was bewildering. The workmen who had been painting the walls of my new studio disappeared like scene shifters, leaving their pails and brushes and overalls where they had been using them when the call had come. These things remained in the same spot for months and months; no one ever came to carry them away. My concierge, a cobbler by profession, gave me a first glimpse of the pathetic side of this crisis that had burst upon us. He sat in his little room at the side of the entrance door all day long, working away at army boots for his sons, silent tears moistening the hard leather in his hands. I couldn't help feeling, as I often stopped and tried to say a few comforting words to him, that those boots were going to walk straight towards death. And they did. In an incredibly short time—and with an appallingly short interval between them—two telegrams came to that poor family. Their sons were among the first to fall on the field of honor.

When the Hôtel Foyot closed, as many of the hotels did at the beginning of the war, I moved into my studio, where the concierge's wife took care of me; and for a time I remained there, looking on helpless and dazed, often going to the Gare du Nord to hand out a few cigarettes to the departing soldiers. How desperately sad it all was! How heart-breaking the separations from their beloved families! And what bravery they

## WANDERINGS

all showed! The soldiers kept up a cheerful front and their mothers and wives and sweethearts smiled through their tears. Only at the last moment was there a convulsive outburst when the women clung in one long, desperate embrace to the uniformed figures they might never see again.

Many of my friends appeared suddenly and disappeared just as suddenly, some of them frantic to find passage on any boat that would take them home. Fortunately for me, some one had suggested during the first days that I draw out all the money I had in the bank. This was a great comfort after the moratorium came into force, and no money at all could be had. Also, early in the summer, I had been asked by a friend to allow her to engage passage to America in the same cabin. She had hoped to obtain in this way, by giving up my passage at the last moment, a cabin alone. This arrangement proved a windfall for me when, later on, finding it impossible to do anything of any value in Paris, I decided to return to America.

All during this time I was desperately anxious to help in some way. I stood in line at various stations along the streets, giving my name and address when admitted and stating my willingness to do anything at all; but invariably I received the reply that I would be notified when my services were needed. Those endless days of waiting to be given something to do—something that might be of only the slightest assistance to the country and people who had done so much for me—were almost

## MODELING MY LIFE

unbearable; and to add to my impatience and restlessness, my money was diminishing rapidly. The past year had been an extravagant one financially. I had bought a house; I had cast several works in bronze; and I was facing the end of my resources in France. Also, I was disturbed over getting a fountain figure which I had promised to deliver that autumn, to America. No doubt my client could have waited for her fountain but I needed the payment.

Finally I decided that the best thing for me to do was to use that steamer passage which my friend, Alice Simpson, had reserved in my name so many months before. Miss Simpson, secretary of the National Sculpture Society, is, as all New York sculptors know, capable of carrying through any project she undertakes. It was through her executive ability that we finally got to Havre—and not alone ourselves, but also my bronze statue, which she somehow managed to get on the train with us, and safely aboard the boat. Miss Simpson had determined to get me back to America and when I had said I would not go without my statue—using this as an excuse to remain in France—she said she would take that, too. How she managed it all is still a miracle to me. But she must have had a very dismal traveling companion for all her trouble and herculean efforts. I couldn't help feeling that I was a renegade for leaving France at a time when she most needed friends; and even Miss Simpson's arguments failed to cheer me. That she was right was proven by the fact that when I sent back

## WANDERINGS

a post office order from Havre to the mayor of Ville d'Avray to be used for the children of soldiers, it was a pitifully small amount. It was all I had left and it would have kept me alive in Paris only a few months; after it was gone I should have become much more of a care than a help to the nation I adored.

All during that long voyage home I had only one consoling thought—I was at least returning with a message to my own people, a message that formulated and developed all the time that America was drawing nearer. I was returning to my own people and I meant to help others awaken them to the fact that it was not only an obligation, but a duty, to give all the aid that we possibly could to war-stricken France.

## IX

### WAR EFFORT

THERE is no doubt about the fact that the war brought out all sorts of unsuspected talents—notably speech-making. Perfectly modest and shy people who had always thought they would die on the spot if forced to face an audience and make an address found they could actually get through a long speech without turning a hair. I know how it was, for I was one of them. Up to that time, whenever I tried to say something to more than a dozen people, my voice would disappear and I would break into a profuse perspiration, reaching the verge of complete collapse. However, the war loosened my tongue and, much to my surprise as well as that of my friends, I found that I could stand up and talk to no matter how many people with absolute calm.

But honesty makes me confess that I almost passed away during my first experience in this new field, which came upon me wholly unexpectedly at a luncheon given at the Gamut Club. I believe I was that uncomfortable person called the guest of honor. While the coffee was being served some one rose and, to my horror, made the announcement that Miss Scudder would make a few remarks. When I realized there was no possible way

## WAR EFFORT

to escape, I tottered to my feet and wondered how in the world I was going to get through the ordeal. It is strange how helpful things come back to one at such moments! While I stood there absolutely tongue-tied, my knees shaking as they had never shaken before, I happened to remember something a man had told me of his first experience in speech-making. "If you are ever called on unexpectedly to make a speech," he had said, "and feel the world crumbling about you—as you undoubtedly will if you have never spoken before—get behind a chair and grasp it with both hands." Well—I did grasp that chair; I did more than that, I held on to it with a despairing clutch; and by the time I had screwed up enough courage to glance at what seemed like an Atlantic Ocean of upturned faces, I had much more confidence. Then, wonder of wonders, I heard my voice sounding out with a certain strident, carrying quality that was, to me, appalling—due no doubt to the small room in which I was speaking. I remember one of the sentences perfectly. I can repeat it now.

"No artist has the right at this moment to think of his work unless in some way it is going to help in ending this terrible struggle that has torn the world asunder. Any gifts we may have should be devoted entirely to winning the war. We have no right to think of ourselves for a single moment."

My friends said afterwards that I made a very good speech—perhaps a bit long but, on the whole, quite good. I suppose the length was due to the fact that,

## MODELING MY LIFE

after having got over the agony of starting I found it just as terrifying to stop. At any rate, when it was all over and I had collapsed in a chair, a number of women came up to shake hands with me and several among them said they agreed with me heartily and were going to follow my suggestion at once.

I shall never forget my utter bewilderment when I reached home the first autumn of the war and found some of my friends and acquaintances more or less indifferent to what was going on in Europe. Many times, in recounting my experiences and impressions of the situation in France, some one would yawn and say: "Oh, Janet, for heaven's sake stop talking about the war!" At first I was deeply wounded and resented this attitude. Very probably I made myself an awful bore during those first months of the war; then, gradually, I began to realize that my position was quite different from most of those about me. I had spent as much time in France as in America; in a way it was my home more than New York was; whereas most of my friends only knew it as a pleasant place to spend a few weeks or months in seeing its life superficially, enjoying its beauty only as something extraneous, knowing its people not at all. At first its war could not be taken as a vital part of their lives. How little I understood my country people! The hour had not yet struck—that was all there was to it. But the hour was not so very long in striking. It seems to me now that it was an amazingly short time before every good American was lightly

## WAR EFFORT

tossing aside his own affairs and going whole-heartedly into war work.

My own opposition—really abhorrence—to German “Kultur” had begun long before the war. Its so-called art development never seemed to me to have anything to do with art at all; even its landscape and architecture had a peculiarly depressing effect upon me. I once attempted to overcome this prejudice and accepted an invitation to motor through Germany with Mrs. Stanford White and her son. This was several years before the war. I started off with the feeling that perhaps my impressions of Germany might change if I saw it with delightful friends. By the time we had got as far as Munich I realized that I wanted to return to France; so I telegraphed some one in Paris to send me an urgent message stating that it was absolutely necessary and most important that I come back at once. Naturally if I felt that way before the German atrocities, it is very easy to understand violent antipathy after the war had burst upon France.

For me, the beginning of active war work in America started one morning when Mrs. William Astor Chanler came to my studio in a great state of excitement. She, as I, had spent many years in Paris and was impatient to awaken her own people to the crying needs of the French. She had dined the night before with Mrs. Lee Thomas and had heard about the soldiers’ kits that were being sent by the English to their men in the trenches. Why shouldn’t Americans send kits to the

## MODELING MY LIFE

French soldiers! I was as enthusiastic as Mrs. Chanler over this idea and we arranged to meet that evening at the Ritz, and after dining with Mrs. Thomas, gathered about a table and began formulating plans for organizing a relief association. Emily Sloane—now Baroness de la Grange—made the fourth of our little group. We worked far into the night, making all sorts of plans but feeling a little uncertain about the best way of arousing enthusiasm over our project. It was Mrs. Chanler who finally hit upon the very clever idea of enlisting Richard Harding Davis's interest. In a few days she had the whole of the United States flooded with soul-stirring literature composed by Mr. Davis, and the Lafayette Fund had come into existence.

The junior committee, consisting of a number of very energetic and attractive young New York women, was put in my charge and this committee immediately went to work. We first designed a ball that was given in the Della Robbia room of the Vanderbilt Hotel at which the members of the committee wore Lafayette costumes. This affair went off with so much success that we decided to give the entertainment each week. The hotel was extremely generous and did everything possible to help us make these balls successful; every one was ready and anxious to give us what was needed for decorations; the florists donated flowers; and the shops offered anything we wanted. The second ball was more crowded than the first—the Moonlight Ball; then followed in quick succession the Italian Ball, the South Sea Island Ball,

## WAR EFFORT

the Russian Ball and on through a series that lasted for many weeks. The Lafayette Fund began to grow to enormous proportions. Illustrated post cards were sent out all over the country, giving pictures of the contents of the kits—a rubber trench coat, woolen underwear, hand-kerchiefs, pencils, pipes, etc. Money poured in to such an extent that we had to enlarge our work rooms. Dozens of people packed kits all day long until thousands and thousands of these helpful packages were being rushed over to France. We had a film taken of our work rooms, which created much interest and increased our funds enormously.

After the Lafayette Fund was going on practically automatically, its originators became interested in the work of the great bazaars which had then begun. Once interest in the war was fully developed in America, her generosity knew no limits; but one thing had always to be very carefully considered—that ever-shifting attention of New York; something new had to be constantly offered; even war work had to be diverting and clever to arouse new excitement.

At the first great bazaar in New York Mrs. Benjamin Guinness and I were given a large section to do what we pleased with. We arranged an indoor garden and called it the *Café de Paris*; and we gave much time and thought to planning how we could keep our *café* up to the profitable mark set by others. We advertised the cook of our *café* as being the granddaughter of an earl—Dotty Larking; and our head waiter as a

## MODELING MY LIFE

prince—Prince Troubetskoy. We had scouts out all over the floors looking for celebrities and, when one was found, he was invited to our section to have something to eat. Once the celebrity was safely landed and placed at a table, I would rush off to a little workshop I had at the back of the café and paint a large sign announcing that Mrs. Vernon Castle was guest of honor that day—or Nijinsky—or some visiting foreign general—or one of our own well-known politicians. It made little difference who the person was, provided he was well in the public eye; and the instant the sign was put up every table in the café would be filled—in fact often the crowd became so great that the food gave out. Those provisions, by the way, were all donated by the generous hotels and restaurants of New York; we never paid a cent for anything and all the money that was taken in was pure profit. Of course our means of getting people in to see celebrities was something of a hoax, as none of them ever made a speech or danced or sang or performed in any way, but we felt that any means of making money those days was justified; and we did make it, tremendous sums.

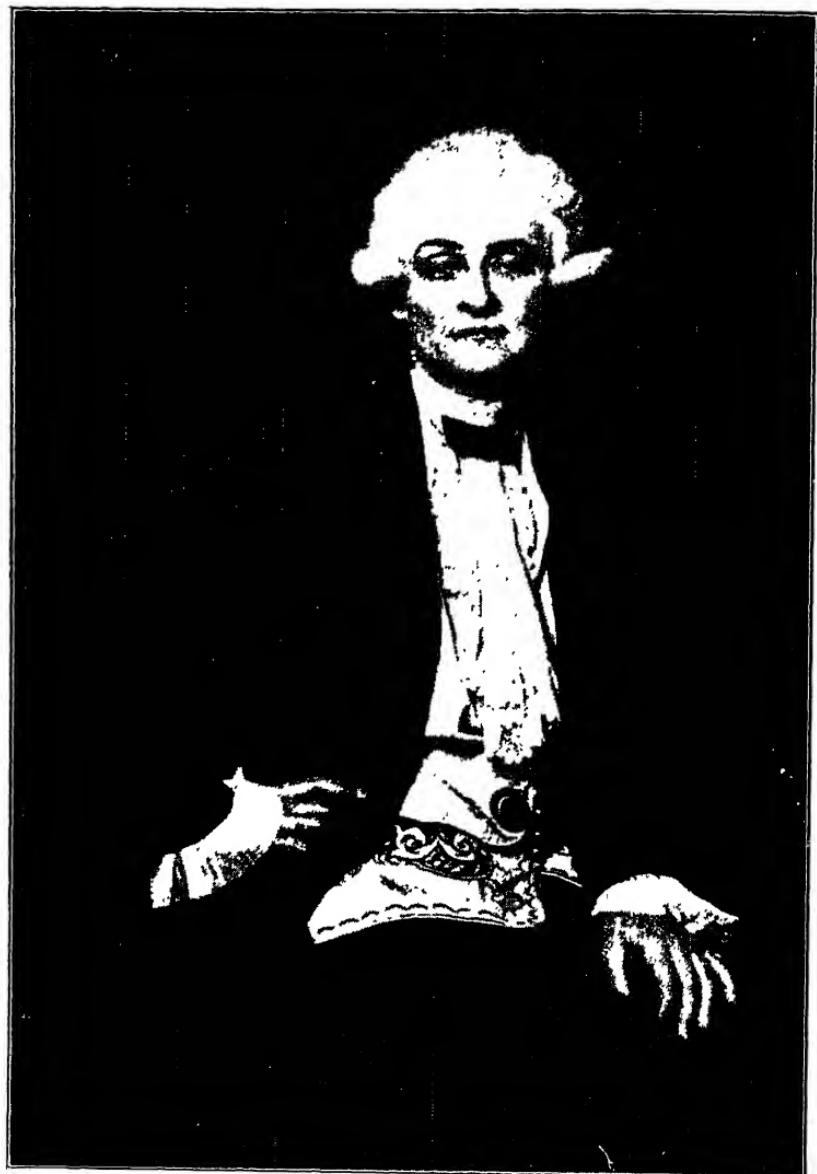
All the effort that was being made in New York and the things I myself took part in were most interesting; but after two years of it—two years in which I had done an amazing amount of work in sculpture, a large fountain, several commissions, among which were a seal for the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Indiana and another which our Government gave to the



*Photo A. B. Bogart, New York*

### **TORTOISE BOY FOUNTAIN**

This photograph taken in Paris Salon, 1913



*Photo White*

JANET SCUDDER IN LAFAYETTE BALL COSTUME

Ball given by Lafayette Fund, 1915 or 1916.

## WAR EFFORT

members of a Brazilian commission for something or other that they had done in prehistoric times, all of which had given me a quite fat bank account—the desire to get back to France and work there on the spot began to grow almost uncontrollable. All that time, living in a studio on Fifty-seventh Street, the hope of returning was foremost in my mind. A fact that now strikes me as somewhat extraordinary is that I accomplished so much in my own field at the time that my thoughts were centering on aiding the country which had done so much for me. The realization that I had left France with all my savings invested and that if I intended to return there and help, it would be necessary to have actual money, may have had something to do with my working so hard and so continuously. At any rate, those first two years of the war were the most profitable I have ever had.

But how to get back! To accomplish this, one had to belong to a special war service. Thousands were offering themselves for overseas work and some hundreds were accepted with the greatest care as to their future efficiency in France. The feeling was beginning to grow that too many untrained workers were already there, especially women who might be actually in the way and a source of trouble.

I was having tea in New York one day with Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss—her husband was then counselor of our Embassy in Paris—and she raised my hopes of being useful by telling me that one of the greatest needs

## MODELING MY LIFE

of the moment was for automobiles and chauffeurs. I jumped at the idea of offering a car and myself as chauffeur. I bought a car at once, had all sorts of accessories attached to it, learned to drive, got all the necessary papers in order—this was the most difficult and trying part of the whole proceeding—and was just on the point of sailing when Mrs. Bliss, who had returned to Paris, cabled me that as gasoline had become very scarce in France it would be useless to add to the number of cars already in service with her *Œuvre*. An awful blow to my hopes!

By this time I was so fired with the idea of getting back to France that I left the car behind and sailed alone. But, alas! once in Paris there seemed literally nothing for me to do. I don't think I have ever encountered such consistently discouraging conditions. There was a great need of help in every direction and yet one was discouraged from lending it. I have never quite made out the psychology of that time; it may have been the inertia that followed in the wake of the first great impetus; it may have been that those who had already got going in certain directions were not cordially disposed towards others who wanted to be in the thick of the work, too; at any rate, I sat about Paris holding my hands for a few days and then rented an apartment, installed a very good cook in it, bought a piano and started out trying to furnish some sort of entertainment and diversion for mutilated and invalided soldiers. Some of my musical friends of the past joined

## WAR EFFORT

me; and I think we did something in the way of helping those poor suffering men to forget, at least for the time being, what they had been through and all they had suffered.

During these entertainments, my friend, Mrs. Lane, came often to sing for the soldiers. Her most popular songs were a series by Sinding, which were so much appreciated and were so really beautiful that we felt they would have a success in New York and bring in funds for the wives and families of artists and writers who had gone to the war and who were no longer able to earn a living. The absolute poverty and suffering of such families in Paris were appalling; and what made their situation even more heart-breaking was the fact that they tried so hard to hide their actual want. There were many people who had lived comfortably and happily until the one source of their income was cut off, leaving them destitute. It has always seemed to me that we are very much more inclined to give help to paupers and forget often that those who do not ask for assistance are sometimes the ones in the direst need of it.

Mrs. Lane and I decided we would return to New York and see what we could do in the way of raising funds for "Les Écrivains Français." Our plan was enthusiastically received. Mrs. Charles Alexander loaned us her ballroom for the first concert, Lloyd Warren made a speech and Camille Lane sang the group of Sinding songs in the original Norwegian, explaining in

## MODELING MY LIFE

English the meaning of each song before she sang it. It was a very smart audience and surely belied the impression so many people have that fashionable audiences do not make good listeners. No one talked or even whispered, and at the end there was a great burst of applause.

The "Société des Auteurs Dramatiques" and "Les Gens de Lettres" of Paris received a most satisfactory send-off later, as we were so encouraged by the first concert that we took a theater and gave a series of matinées. Then, another big bazaar being on the tapis, we threw in our help there and arranged a spectacular opening for the first night in which Mrs. Lane, surrounded by twelve French marines and twelve American sailors, stood on the stage and sang the *Marseillaise*. During the encore the entire audience took up the refrain and sang it with thrilling effect. It was easy enough to see now that America was no longer indifferent to what was going on on the other side. Our interest and sympathies were fully aroused and were well on the way to the most astounding outburst of enthusiasm and effort that the world has ever seen.

When America finally went into the war and was no longer merely sending over vast sums of money for relief work and Red Cross and Y.M.C.A. workers, but whole armies of men, who were going to fight in the trenches beside those who had been at it so long, Mrs. Lane and I were filled with envy. So many were going to the Front that we could not bear the thought of not being

## WAR EFFORT

among them. But now that our country was actually in the thick of the fight, that old bugbear—finding some actual, definite work to do—seemed to have grown to even greater proportions. Thousands of people were clamoring to get “over there” and were offering themselves for any job that would be given them. One evening when Julia Marlowe and Sothern were dining with me in Washington Mews—I had a small house there at that time—they announced that they had just signed up with the Y.M.C.A. and were sailing for France in a few days. We immediately began to ask all sorts of questions about the entertainment department of the Y.M.C.A. in which the Sotherns had been enrolled. Mr. Sothern, seeing our eagerness, said he would introduce us to the head of that department and suggested that Mrs. Lane go over as a singer to entertain the boys in the camps. At that time there was a great demand for entertainers; and in a few days Mrs. Lane had been accepted and was in the midst of learning a lot of jazz songs—which she had never sung before—and arranging her program preparatory to sailing.

Those were very sad days for me. I had been told by the Y.M.C.A. that they had no place for me; sculptors didn’t seem to fit in anywhere—if I had been a painter it would have been different; but a sculptor! What under the sun could a sculptor do in the war? Mr. Sothern came to my rescue and suggested to the head of the entertainment department that I be sent along as

## MODELING MY LIFE

Mrs. Lane's manager and be given the job of making speeches before each concert. I jumped at the idea and declared that I had spoken on many and very serious occasions; that I was considered a very good speaker. Fortunately every one was too busy to try me out on this assertion and make me show my talents; but I congratulated myself on not having failed that day at the Gamut Club, though that experience and the more remote one when I read an essay on the subject of Utopia—under the active threats of my stepmother—rose before me with far from reassuring suggestions. But nothing would have fazed me; I would have undertaken anything they might have given me to do. If any one had told me, a few months before, that my share in doing something in the war was going to be that of speechmaker I would have laughed in derision. But once the Y.M.C.A. manager had engaged me for that purpose, along with that of concert manager, I went to work seriously to learn the new game of speech-making. And so—while Mrs. Lane practised jazz songs in one room, I prepared and delivered speeches to the bare walls of my studio.

We kept a journal of our war experiences; and nothing gives us more pleasure than to get it out occasionally and re-create the adventures Mrs. Lane and I had. Sometimes we wonder how we stood the horrible discomforts, the strain, the utter fatigue and the distressing scenes we encountered all through those six months with the Y.M.C.A. In a way the whole time was a

## WAR EFFORT

nightmare of crowded, filthy trains; arrivals at all hours of the night in strange places where we were seldom met and where no arrangements had been made to take care of us; orders to leave at a moment's notice for this, that and the other place; and food and beds that were beyond anything we had ever imagined. An ever-shifting film of places—Blois, Tours, Montoir, Vannes, Langres, Fort de Stain, Saint Nazaire, and many others—rises before me when I think of those days.

It is said that war brings out the best and the worst in people. I am inclined to accept this theory. For our own boys who were in the trenches, doing the fighting, offering their lives for their country's honor, there can be nothing but the most unstinted praise; they showed themselves just what we all expected of them—brave, good sports, cheerful, in fact entirely wonderful; judging from them America has no need for worrying over her future. But the Y.M.C.A., with which I worked for six consecutive months, proved to be all wrapped round with red tape, at times very trying.

To a woman who has fought her way through life, made her decisions and planned out each step that would lead towards constructive work, the experience of finding herself absolutely under the direction and control of an inferior person is extremely amusing—in retrospect. It was quite the contrary while the experience was going on. My first Y.M.C.A. boss took charge of me as soon as I stepped on board the *Espagne* sailing from New York. She immediately announced that she

## MODELING MY LIFE

had been given entire charge of the volunteers, would take care of us and that we need not worry about anything. After this pronouncement she promptly took to her bed, overcome by the unaccustomed motion of a ship, and did not appear again during the whole voyage.

Upon arrival at Bordeaux, still unused to the idea that my whole life was being taken care of by a young woman who had been unable to conquer seasickness, I started off to make arrangements for the journey to Paris, engaged some one to go ahead and reserve a sleeping compartment on the night train, and as soon as the gang-plank had been lowered, grabbed our valises and was all ready to make a rush across Bordeaux to the station. Such individual assurance, however, did not meet with approval from the Y.M.C.A. secretaries in charge of us. I was peremptorily told that my place was with the other volunteers, that I should give my valises into the hands of the man engaged to look after them, and that I should await the busses which were to carry the whole party to an hotel. I gave up and meekly fell in line. We were crowded into camions, taken to an hotel where we signed papers—the number of papers that we signed that day would fill volumes; and then we sat through a long lecture delivered by a Y.M.C.A. secretary, who had been in France about two weeks and who told us in detail what our special duties were going to be. After this followed long sermons and prayers; and finally we were all put into day coaches, made to sit up all night, and, once in Paris were told

## WAR EFFORT

we could do what we pleased for the next two weeks, at the end of which time we must report for duty.

Of course regulations had to be followed, but how I did fume and chafe under that first taste of red tape! Not since I had got safely away from the control of my stepmother had I been ordered about and told what to do. At times I wondered if I could stand it; then I would always say to myself: This is what you wanted —this is what every one is undergoing—this is your chance to help. Keep hold of yourself and be calm! I have heard many others laugh over similar experiences. One man, a banker, told me that the only war work given him to do was the cleaning of lavatories in a southern camp; and another, a man over fifty, who had never done anything in the way of hard or disagreeable labor, was given, after months of insistence, the job of crossing on transports where he did nothing but wash decks. All of which goes to prove that no American balked at anything—just so it was something that would help war work. But I must say it took self-control and determination always to follow the orders of perfectly inexperienced and inefficient people whose heads had been turned by the authority given them by army uniforms.

To be once more in Paris and with two weeks of freedom from authority was a consoling interim. But those hectic first nights with air attacks made sleep impossible, and those terrifying days during which resounding crashes from Big Bertha kept one continually on the

## MODELING MY LIFE

jump were not full of repose. So to prepare ourselves for our labors, Mrs. Lane and I went out to my house at Ville d'Avray. There, in the quiet of those charming surroundings, it was almost impossible to believe there was a war—at least until, in the middle of the night, we were awakened by the shrieking of the "Alerte," the signal that an air attack was imminent. We had been told to watch for this signal and that the moment it was heard we must rush for a place of safety. We chose the kitchen as the safest place, as the walls and ceiling had recently been repaired and were thought to be particularly strong. This turned out to be a somewhat unfortunate choice, as the woman who had come to help about the house and cook for us had bought a large Camembert cheese which she stored away in a kitchen cabinet. In the tightly closed room a particularly ominous odor—at the time we did not know what it was—became so strong that, even though the sky was filled with the awful racket of firing guns and exploding shells, we found it impossible to remain. If we had to die, we decided it would be a much more honorable death to be killed by a Boche bomb than by the scent of a Camembert cheese. We bolted for the salon and left the safer place to that cheese.

That night seemed to be entirely without end. After the air attack subsided and the protecting guns became silent, the most dismal sound imaginable continued until dawn—the howling of dogs. The weird, mournful suggestion of that sound was the last straw to nerves that

## WAR EFFORT

were already badly worn by an uncertain sea voyage with the ever-present danger of submarines. The next day we returned to Paris. The peace of Ville d'Avray was a delusion. We found it much more comfortable to spend the hours of attack in the cellar of the Continental Hotel, where easy chairs and the companionship of human beings made the time less long and dreary—and where Camembert cheeses were locked away in ice chests.

No one who has not been through air attacks can imagine the horror of them. When I realized that so many people in Paris had lived through them, uncomplaining and unafraid, during months and months, and intended to live through many more if necessary, my admiration for the French people increased more than ever. And the "Big Bertha" was horrible. Yet the way those French people took it was nothing short of marvelous. We were in the Continental Hotel when we had our first experience with the long-distance gun. The hotel was in direct range that day. The first shot landed in the Tuileries garden just across the Rue de Rivoli and exploded with a crash that shook the whole street. We waited, stunned, to see what had happened; then, very gradually, came the realization that the people about us were taking it as a matter of course. A woman in the hall, polishing a brass door knob, did not stop a moment in her work; and outside in the street a man continued calling out in a nasal voice that well-known, century-old Paris cry: "Voici le raccommodeur de

## MODELING MY LIFE

faïences et porcelaines! Avez-vous des porcelaines et faïences à racommoder?"—which seemed particularly appropriate at that moment, for there must have been many pieces of porcelain that needed mending after such a terrific crash.

At the end of two weeks Mrs. Lane and I were summoned to Headquarters and told that our road had been mapped out, papers and passes in order and that we should start off at once. We were called the "Lane Company" and were hustled about from camp to camp to give concerts for our boys, very much like a road company at home except that I'm sure the road companies never had anything like the experiences we encountered along the way. Sometimes, when Mrs. Lane was utterly worn out, I wrote back to Headquarters and complained of the lack of arrangements and preparations for her, explaining that she would be unable to continue singing for the soldiers if she were compelled to endure these unnecessary hardships, which were already affecting her voice. We were delighted to have the chance to do our bit, we were in it heart and soul, that is what we had come over for, but often the indifference and even heartlessness of the Y.M.C.A. secretaries in charge of the camp huts were more than we could bear in silence. At one time we went twenty-four hours without food; and often we literally sat up all night because there was no bed to sleep in. At moments the utter stupidity of red tape got the best of me and I had to burst out in a loud voice against it. Once, seeing a French officer who

## WAR EFFORT

tried to buy a package of cigarettes at a Y.M.C.A. canteen refused, I asked the woman in charge what that meant. She explained, red in the face with mortification, that she had her orders to sell to no one but American soldiers; that she was subject to such embarrassing refusal and that she secretly often went against rules and let the French soldiers have what they asked for.

But it was not only to the French that things were often refused without a special order. Once, when Mrs. Lane was worn out from having sung a whole afternoon in the hospital to sick soldiers while their wounds were being dressed—this was done at the suggestion of the doctor, who said music would help the tortured men through those horribly painful moments—I found that absolutely nothing to eat was to be had in the hotel in which we were spending the night. I went immediately to the Y.M.C.A. quarters, where the secretaries were having supper and asked for food. The table about which they sat was heavily laden with bread—white bread!—butter, bowls of sugar and large platters of food. My hungry eyes took in everything while I timidly asked the man in charge to let me have a little butter and bread and sugar. He said it was impossible without somebody or other's written order, and that this authority had gone away for two days! At this my hunger became uncontrollable. I grabbed a napkin from the sideboard and reached over the heads of those feeding secretaries, dumped the contents of a sugar bowl

## MODELING MY LIFE

in it, picked up several pieces of bread and finally appropriated a plate of butter. No one protested, no one said anything—and neither did I. But what I thought of an American organization and American men who could permit themselves to reach such a state of bad manners, to put it mildly, kept me awake all that night. Our compensation, though, for such experiences came during the concerts when the soldiers responded to our efforts to cheer them up and gave us lots of applause and thanks.

I suppose we would have gone on giving concerts up to the end of the war if Mrs. Lane's voice—due to exposure and the hard life—had not given out. This meant looking for another job and landing for a few weeks in canteen work. From that we went on to something which interested us both immensely—decorating Y.M.C.A. huts. It came about quite by chance that we fell into this form of war-work. Miss Ferris, in charge of the decoration of huts, happened to tell us that she was very hard up for assistants, and asked us to take over the decorating of the hut we were in at that time at Saint Nazaire. Our work met with such approval that other secretaries, seeing the Saint Nazaire hut so changed, clamored for us to come to theirs and make them a little more cheerful to live in. This ended in our becoming traveling house painters. We went from camp to camp, mixed colors, climbed ladders, hung curtains and accomplished a lot of work. I don't think I ever before realized how much surroundings have to do

## WAR EFFORT

with one's state of mind. Those huts, when we went into them, were plain, dismal, bare, mud-splashed structures that were depressing beyond words; when we left them they were gay rooms, filled with colors that suggested sunny days and cheerful times. We tried to make them into a message of hope and gaiety for the soldiers.

After the six months, which we had signed up to work with the Y.M.C.A., had come to an end we got ourselves transferred to the Red Cross; and here our work met with delightful coöperation on all sides. We accomplished more in a few days with the Red Cross than we had with the Y.M.C.A. in weeks; there was not nearly so much red tape and never any stupid interference with our work; and a not unimportant point is that we were always well cared for and had no physical discomforts. We continued working with this organization several months after the armistice had been signed.

On the 11th of November, 1918, we had the luck to be in Paris. That morning I had been out to Ville d'Avray to look over my house, which I had turned over to the Y.M.C.A. and which had been used by that organization for some time. On the way to Headquarters in Paris to make some arrangements for decorating a hut, we heard vague but insistent rumors about the possibility of good news reaching Paris that day. Something was in the air; we hardly knew what; but every one appeared to feel a little more cheerful than usual. We

## MODELING MY LIFE

hated going down to the cellar that day and sorting our paints and curtains; we wanted to roam the streets and pick up some news—anything that would tell us the end was in sight. Mrs. Lane and I stood it as long as we could, then we bolted and rushed out to see what was going on. The streets were disappointingly calm. Some one told us the armistice had already been signed; others said this was a premature report; and at any rate the French people were not yet making any demonstration—they were too accustomed to false reports to accept such momentous news without certainty. Though there was a very distinct buzz in the air no special edition of papers had yet appeared.

We lunched at a restaurant on the boulevards and looked impatiently through the windows for some signs of excitement. Gradually small groups began to assemble, shake hands and embrace; and finally a crowd of "midinettes" appeared with tricolored decorations in their hair—and as every one in Paris knows, the "midinettes" are the barometers of festivity. Still, there was nothing definite. I began to wonder if the French, having waited so long for this day, were going to let it pass without doing much about it. We were on the point of going back to work, as there seemed to be nothing to wait for or to see. But once out in the street after lunch the scene changed suddenly as if by magic. Small processions were forming in every direction. Poilus, Americans, Australians, Tommies, Italians, Greeks, Japanese, and people of every allied

## WAR EFFORT

nation appeared from every corner and door and window. In a few minutes the boulevards were so crowded that we were jammed back into a recess and could not move in any direction. The singing of the *Mar-sellaise* gradually rose, solemn, sonorous, drowning all sounds of traffic. Taxis, so filled that you could not count the occupants, passed slowly through the masses of people. Groups of *poilus* carried American soldiers high on their shoulders and as they passed along Frenchwomen rushed after to embrace them. The whole scene was one of very deep emotion—with as many tears as smiles.

As I stood there looking on, I pulled out my handkerchief to wipe my eyes; and a man standing next to me said:

“Don’t be ashamed of your tears, madame. They were never so honest as they are to-day.” Then he added, noticing my American uniform: “And it is to you that we owe this day. Without America we would never have had it.”

“No—no!” I insisted. “France would have stood the brunt of the war to the last! She would never have given up!”

He nodded solemnly. “Yes—France has the right to be proud—but without America she could not have gone on much longer.”

Soon I found myself walking along with a midinette on one side of me and a *poilu* on the other. I don’t think any of us had any idea where we were going; we

## MODELING MY LIFE

were just following or being pushed along by the crowd. No one was cross, no one impatient; we were all, it seemed, a huge mass of friends; but as for making progress in any direction, that seemed to be the last thing any one wanted to do. We just gave ourselves over to the movement of the throng and thought about nothing —except the happiness of that day. We finally got into the Place de la Concorde and climbed up on one of the Boche cannons placed there. Those hundreds of German war implements gathered there became orchestra chairs from which to view the amazing celebration. Machine guns became victory chariots covered with poilus and drawn by American soldiers.

To be in Paris that memorable eleventh of November and to see the gathering storm of joy develop and sweep over the whole city was worth everything we had been through. Crossing the ocean with the fear of submarines in the back of one's mind; the terrifying bombardments of Paris from long-distance guns, the nightly "alertes," the descent into moldy cellars—all these gruesome details counted for nothing beside the emotion of being alive and in Paris on the day of the armistice. And yet there was a very deep sadness throughout all that gaiety. No one seemed to forget, even in the moment of triumph, the millions who had died to make that day possible. There was a great deal of singing—popular songs and always the Marseillaise—but there was no band music; that would have been somehow too harsh, too loud, too mechanical; the music

## WAR EFFORT

that burst forth came only from throats and straight from the heart.

I shall always be thankful for my war experiences, even though they were of no particular importance. And I am grateful that I was permitted to do something, no matter how little it was, for the country that suffered so extraordinarily and so bravely. My enthusiasm and love for France were tremendously increased during those five years of her terrible hardships, and as for my own glorious country, no words can express the pride of Americans who were privileged to watch her on the spot put an end to that horrible war.

# X

## LATER REFLECTIONS

EVERY one who took any active part in the war—I mean those who had thrown their interests and energies into seeing it through and letting the personal side of life take care of itself—was faced with a very serious problem when the armistice was signed. The moment of exaltation that followed on victory left an appalling void; the object of life appeared suddenly to have vanished. Where were we! What were we going to do! How under the sun could we go back and pick up the threads dropped four years before!

Like every one else who had been through that horrible upheaval, I was bewildered, not only as to the future but also as to the immediate present. I understood so perfectly the attitude of those boys who had spent months in training camps and, later on, months in the trenches, when they were suddenly told that they were to be sent back home into the same old unromantic grind of their former existence. At first a great joy and relief and then a curious flatness of spirits. A silent studio with a north light and my profession of sculptor seemed to me, during those early days of declared peace, just as tiresome and uninteresting as routine life on a farm and the deadly dull round of village days might

## LATER REFLECTIONS

appear to a soldier. Adventure had suddenly been taken away from us; there was no longer any danger. There is no denying the fact that a certain zest for life had gone with the signing of the armistice; and we were once more facing the matter-of-fact. For a long time one felt at loose ends; we had worked ourselves up to a white heat of enthusiasm and then, presto! out of a clear sky we were told to bundle up and get back home, that it was all over, that there was nothing more to do. Sometimes, in reviewing those days and the after-effects of the armistice, I wonder if a great deal of our present-day dissatisfaction and unrest is not due in great measure to that stoppage of tremendous effort. If we had been able to go on until we had, in a way, exhausted ourselves, it would surely have been easier to go back home and pick up again with the satisfied feeling of having shot our bolt. There is nothing so quieting and relaxing as complete exhaustion.

Mrs. Lane and I faced each other, a few days after the armistice, with expressions of quite frank consternation. What were we going to do! Fortunately for us the Red Cross work had not ended. The returning home of those thousands of men was not a question of days. It would be months before they could be got off; and in the meantime they had to be fed and housed and amused. Huts and mess halls and rest rooms were needed, cheerful places, and to us was given the job of making recreation huts as cheerful as possible. So off we went, splashing about through France with huge

## MODELING MY LIFE

brushes and enormous quantities of brilliant colors, making dark and muddy places gay and bright. It was great fun and we left a trail of good spirits after us in the form of vivid color.

The psychological effect of colors on the spirits of American soldiers in France had been a revelation to us. It actually developed into a passion, a real mission. We began to study the meaning of certain colors and their subtle effects. We developed all sorts of ideas about what we considered a new science. We decided particularly to break up the old tradition that ceilings should be white and only white—which we decided was an utterly silly tradition. Take for instance a new-born child. It spends months and months on its back with the ceiling as its first real companion. Why should it blink away all that time gazing at something that is glaring and wholly uninteresting! Even for a grown-up the ceiling counts more than the walls of a room—especially in a bedroom. It is the last thing we see at night and the first thing we see in the morning. Ceilings should be warm and cheerful, not deep colors but gentle glows. The idea that colors absorb the light and that rooms are made dark when ceilings are not white is all nonsense. We went further in the psychological theory of our color schemes and cited instances of the effect of color on certain temperaments. If a person were surrounded with a color that was sympathetic to him, the best in him would surely be brought out. And then, certain combinations of color bring out certain

## LATER REFLECTIONS

emotions. Each one of us demonstrates this in expressing a preference for a certain color; surely the color we prefer is the one that has the pleasantest emotional effect upon us.

Color is one of the greatest gifts God has given us. And yet, strangely enough, the use of this gift has never been very seriously studied. Even to-day, when we think interior decorating has achieved its high mark of consideration, the architect or decorator follows his own inclinations as to color schemes and the owner of the house, the one who is going to pass his days in the rooms, does not seem to realize that it is of any importance whatever whether he is surrounded by greens or blues or reds or yellows.

I am perfectly convinced that the formative years of a child's life are tremendously affected by the colors on the walls of the room in which he passes his time. Take red for instance: on one child it may have a salutary effect, bringing out the best that is in him; in another case it might be actually unhealthy. Women talk and think a great deal about the colors that "become" them; they spend hours over the subject of the colors of their dresses without giving a thought to the color of the background against which these dresses are to be seen; and yet the colors of her setting, her room, are much more important than the colors a woman puts on her back. Sometimes we have moments of real inspiration as to colors, as was recently shown when a smart hotel in New York found that a newly decorated dining-room

## MODELING MY LIFE

was not popular, that people would not dine there—all of which was due, as was later explained by one of the hotel's most constant patrons, to the fact that the color of the room, a dull green, was not only most depressing but also very unbecoming. The time is not so far off when it will be realized that the health, happiness, and good nature of each individual depend upon his being surrounded by the colors that best suit his temperament. Of course, as so often happens in America, a theory may develop into a crusade, and after the crusade has begun to sweep the country one will no doubt accept invitations to spend the week-end in the country, only with the understanding that the room given him will be done in a subtle shade of crushed mulberry with touches of gilt on the furniture; or he may get to the point where he will carry his own color schemes round with him so as to avoid any temperamental upset.

The more huts and rest-houses we painted, the more Mrs. Lane and I became obsessed with our color schemes. We wanted to get beyond interior decoration and get out into the open and do huge exteriors. Nothing smaller than a hangar seemed to offer space enough to satisfy us. We got to the point where we saw streets of color, where all the shops and houses and theaters were gaily painted; we even had visions of long lines of carriages and motors and camions painted in all sorts of combinations of strong colors. We thought our ideas very advanced at that time, but already, particularly in Paris, we are seeing them come into actual existence.

## LATER REFLECTIONS

We were only thinking a few years in advance of the moment—as any one can see who strolls about Paris these days. Shop after shop has shed its drab reddish brown, the formerly accepted color for façades, and has taken unto itself bright blues and reds and greens or yellows; a perfectly black taxicab is beginning to be an exception. It is only a matter of a year or two when Paris will be a lovely mass of color.

That was what we dreamed of making of New York, in those after-armistice days; we wanted to see it a city of gay and cheerful colors; and we went home with high hopes, believing we had a real mission. We talked ourselves blue and red and pink and green in the face, but we had very little chance to put these colors on the outside walls of houses. At last a ray of hope came. We actually landed a job—with an automobile show-room on upper Broadway. Our opportunity had come to show our native land what we could do in the way of brightening it up. We painted the outside of the shop bright blue and yellow; and the show window was nothing less than a riot of color. When the work was done and unveiled, crowds stopped and gaped in amazement and we were fully convinced that success had rushed down upon us with hurtling force. But alas! that same day one of the owners of the company turned up in New York, gave an alarmed look at our handiwork, ordered the building put back at once into its conservative chocolate-brown and timid tans and then returned to the Ritz and immediately died. Mrs. Lane and I

## MODELING MY LIFE

tried to accept the blow bravely, but we were desperately discouraged; however, we didn't go to the Ritz and die, we just went down to the dock and took the first boat sailing for France—she to begin painting pictures and I once more to inhabit my silent studio with the north light. It was all well enough to dream of the streets of New York looking like bands of beautiful colored ribbons, but while we were dreaming, it was necessary to go on living, and living, so far as I am concerned, seemed very definitely to settle down to sculpture in my studio, tucked away in the Latin Quarter. Besides, the war was over, and we were gradually drifting back into the rut, though I doubt very much if our footsteps will ever exactly fit again into the same old prints.

The years go gliding along, people come and go, and my little faun, almost completed, lifts the corners of his eyes, picks up his reeds and sends me a furtive glance, smiling—and sarcastic. I'm sure he was mocking, just this morning, when he glanced at a richly clad lady who came into my studio, sank down in a chair and glanced about at my work.

"If I had only had the time—or the encouragement—or the money in my youth I also might have done something in an artistic way!" She sighed deeply and drew her furs closer about her. A sculptor's studio is not exactly a cozy place on the desperately cold Paris mornings. "But—alas—it is too late now!"

Even though my faun smiled more mockingly than

## LATER REFLECTIONS

ever, I did not. Such expressions of unfulfilled desire always arouse my sympathy. Though often spoken casually and without any special intent, I invariably interpret them as coming straight from the heart. Every one has a longing to do creative work—be it ever so vague and unformulated; and being an artist does not necessarily mean just knowing how to paint or model or compose music and design houses.

So when the dissatisfied because unoccupied lady said, "If I had only had the time—or the encouragement—or the money," I tried to explain to her that none of these things was necessary because no one who wants to be an artist is bothered about finding time and money and encouragement to pursue his studies. Some of our best artists have studied and developed their artistic career after finishing a hard day's work. If the impulse is strong enough time will be found. As for money, one has only to cite incidents of hundreds who have struggled straight through years of poverty until success comes. I know what I am talking about, for I had to do it myself. Getting up at five o'clock in the morning and cooking my own breakfast never lessened enthusiasm in the slightest degree. It was all a necessary part of making the opportunities that I craved and was determined to have. As for encouragement, what more do we need than the thrilling knowledge within ourselves that we might possibly do something that will live long after we are dead. And as for its being too late—that is pure nonsense. Every one of us ought

## MODELING MY LIFE

to be doing something worth while right up to the moment when we go to bed for the last time. William De Morgan began to write after he was seventy; very few men are presidents of the United States until they are well past fifty; the best statue of Jeanne d'Arc in the world—the one that stands before the Rheims cathedral—was done by a man who began to study sculpture after he was forty—Paul Dubois; and recently I have known a woman who commenced to paint after she was fifty, and whose work, in less than a year, was received in the Paris Salon. Instead of saying it is too late, how much more sensible it would be to say: "Here I am past fifty. I have lived through the tempestuous periods of life. I have learned my lessons with burnt fingers and enduring experiences. I know what love, hate, friendship, suffering, joy, are. I have tasted all the emotions. I know what I think of this existence they call life. Now—before me lies a peaceful period in which I can give to the world, in more or less helpful form, what all these things have meant to me. The time has come for me to make my contribution to enduring things. What shall it be?"

Among the majority of people who think at all about the Fine Arts there is a belief that the artist is born and not made. I believe that every individual descended from more or less intellectual forebears is gifted in one way or another. It is only a matter of finding out what the natural bent of the individual is and allowing him to pursue that bent in his early formative years. Par-

## LATER REFLECTIONS

ents are incredibly careless and indifferent about studying the inclinations of their children. I know a man who is a brilliant writer to-day who was discouraged all during his younger years by a father who wanted him to be a business man. Success, it seems to me, depends entirely upon the force of character in the pursuit of a career and not at all upon talent. The arts of painting and sculpture have, in our time, been surrounded by a tradition that they belonged, as professions, to a chosen few. Unless one were born with some mystic indications of genius, one must not think of being an artist. As a matter of fact, often the most brilliant beginners in art are never heard of afterwards. On the other hand a slow, laborious worker may develop into a great artist.

Art is one of the mysteries of life and no rules can be made about it. During the great movement of art among the Greeks, sculpture was looked upon as a simple profession that any child could be apprenticed to and no more difficult than any other calling. That is perhaps the reason that the Greeks produced so many masterpieces; and it rather strengthens me in my theory that every child in the public or private schools should study art—not from the “flat” but from nature. A child should be taught to draw the object that he is learning to spell. Often quite intelligent people say they have no talent because they cannot draw a line. Not being able to “draw a line” is not an indication of lack of talent; it is a confession of a stupid education.

## MODELING MY LIFE

Just think how much more difficult it is to learn to write letters and to form them into words and sentences than it is to sit down before a teapot and draw it on paper! This inclusion of drawing and painting and modeling in the education of every child naturally would not make of every child an artist, but it would result in the development of many more artists than we have now; and it would certainly give a greater and wider appreciation of things artistic to the general public.

I have often been asked why sculpture is considered one of the most difficult of all the professions and why it is that comparatively few students who undertake it arrive. It is a fact that, while there are hundreds of painters who make distinguished successes in America—where success in every human effort is open to the ambitious—the number of well-known sculptors can be counted on the fingers of two hands; I am almost inclined to say on the fingers of one hand. Why is this? The reason is perfectly simple and expressed in one word—memorials. The popular use of sculpture in America takes the form of commemorating our dead—our war heroes, our poets, our philanthropists, etc. In no country in the world is more honor paid to dead celebrities. But why wait until they are dead to begin honoring them? Why should our famous statesmen, generals, poets, and philanthropists not pose themselves for their portrait statues? Whatever these national heroes may have done to win the right to stand forth immortalized has, in most cases, been done long before

## LATER REFLECTIONS

their death. But it is a tradition that a memorial should not even be whispered about until long after the death of the distinguished person. The sculptor is then selected, and after a mad scramble to gather together photographs and old clothes, he begins his work under the most disheartening circumstances—and the result is usually another bronze horror which more often than not arouses public disfavor. Often, after several such experiences, the discouraged sculptor gives up his profession and turns to something else.

Why shouldn't this tradition of waiting until a man has died before his memorial is begun be put away with other childish things! Why shouldn't our heroes pose for their statues and thus give the artist a chance to do works of art! When the time comes—if it ever does—when women will be as generally immortalized as men, the situation will be still worse. Just at present, fortunately for women, men have almost a monopoly on public memorials in America, indeed all over the world—a fact which, so far as throwing light on the question of manly wisdom as it now exists, might be studied with profit.

Many years ago, when I was in Japan, I was very much interested in a story Lafcadio Hearn had written, called "A Living God." It was a tale of a simple man who risked everything to save a whole village from a tidal wave. The peasants wanted to honor this man in some way and at last it was decided that the highest honor they could bestow upon him was to declare him

## MODELING MY LIFE

a god—their idea in doing this being that the spirit in him that had made him willing to risk everything to save others was a divine spirit and should be worshiped as such. So they built a temple, engraved his name above the door and worshiped there with prayer and offerings. And all the time he went on living with his family in a little thatched house not far away.

This story and the idea of honoring with some memorial a man before he was dead made a great impression on me—especially as I had spent so many long and dreary hours in my youth creating some sort of memorial for those who had been dead many years and who could not possibly get any satisfaction out of the fact that a work of art was to be erected to their memory. It struck me as a tremendously living and effective gesture to encourage a man who had done something helpful to humanity while he was still alive. Of course we have got our medals and decorations and red ribbons and all such things to show our approval of what has been done, but it has been left to the Japanese to build a temple to a living man.

This story returned very forcibly to me recently when I made my yearly pilgrimage to pay my respects to that American who has the finest of all records among American women during the War—Mildred Aldrich in her little house on the Marne. I was shocked when I was told that it was very probable that this house would soon fall into the hands of just anybody at all and eventually crumble to bits and leave behind it no memory

## LATER REFLECTIONS

of the brave American woman who lived there through the very midst of the battle of the Marne and, assisted only by her equally brave French servant, Amélie, gave first aid to the wounded, food to the officers and splendid words of comfort and encouragement to every soldier that passed her gate. I learned that the lease of the little house was about to expire and that it was very likely that the spot might be entirely lost as a document of American bravery even during the lifetime of Mildred Aldrich. The Japanese story at once sprang into my mind. Why should not this little house become a memorial while there was still time to secure it! Why should not Miss Aldrich be given the pleasure of knowing, during her lifetime, that her name is going to be handed down to posterity! She certainly deserves it more than Barbara Frietchie, who did nothing more than wave an American flag from her window. This suggestion was made, my idea was taken up with enthusiasm and already generous Americans are sending in checks to make the idea an accomplished fact. The house is to be bought and made into a landmark and the Mildred Aldrich Memorial is well started.

While I am writing these last words I look up now and then and catch the peculiarly mocking smile of my little faun. He looks exactly as if he were asking me a question and awaiting an answer. When I lean forward and try to catch the meaning on his always smiling lips, I imagine him saying:

“Why are you so busily writing all those solemn words

## MODELING MY LIFE

about war and color and memorials—you who have never done anything but gay creatures like me! If you really have all those definite ideas on so many subjects, why haven't you been more serious in your profession! You, who criticize war monuments in your own country, why is it that you have shirked doing one yourself! Why is it that you create only happy, cheerful little things like me!"

Of course questions like these demand much more serious replies than his gay smile suggests; and almost without being aware of it I launch forth on explanations. I recount to him the history of garden sculpture in America. I tell him that the first manifestation consisted of iron dogs and stags—after which came lead fountains made of storks and cat-tails and one thing and another, all of them equally dreary—and that then followed an invasion of broken-down "old antiques," or copies of them, transplanted from Rome, marble statues that had nothing to do with the American landscape or the American temperament.

"You, my little faun child, and all your brothers and sisters and cousins created before you, may not always be important; in your turn you may be cast into the scrap heap; but at least you have helped to open up a vast field in American sculpture. You really don't believe—you can't—that I should have been more useful to the world at large if I had done portraits of dead heroes in bronze Prince Alberts or in military uniforms! You, like every one else, would have turned away from

## LATER REFLECTIONS

them with a shudder. Instead, in creating you, I have blazed a trail along which many American sculptors are now happily traveling. Garden sculpture in America has become an art in itself—and you are still leading others merrily along their way."

The tilted eyebrows lowered and my little faun gave me one fleeting but very straight glance; and then—I am almost sure—he nodded, as much as to say he understood at last the honest intentions of his creator.

THE END







